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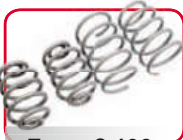
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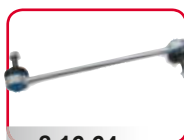
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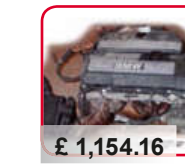
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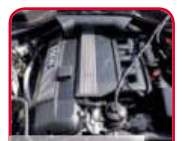
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FIRST WORDS

We all have bad days in the office, every single one of us, even if we do jobs we love, like this one. For me, the bad days are when I'm trying to juggle emails and social media messages from readers and potential feature car owners whilst also trying to put a magazine out on time and keep my ad team happy and my design team from losing their minds while I ask for the 57th minor tweak to the cover.

I do love this job, though, and it's filled with a monthly cycle of highs and lows; as one magazine disappears out the door, there's a lull while I plan the next one and then we start hurtling towards the next deadline while I chase owners for information, snappers for images and writers for copy. But whenever I'm having a bad day I just look at some of the amazing cars that you've been building and it's guaranteed to put a smile on my face.

Just the other day I was going through a list of some upcoming features and making some slightly inappropriate noises because they are so good and I am genuinely excited about getting them in the magazine and out there for all of you to enjoy. We've got some absolutely awesome cars waiting their turn and I can tell you now that I'm confident you're going to enjoy what's heading your way in the coming months and, looking ahead, in 2016.

There's no need to wait, though, because we've packed some pretty exceptional cars into this issue (like we do every month) that I hope you will enjoy. When our cover car dropped into my email inbox I knew there was only one place for it to go, because when someone builds a 580whp twin-turbo E24 you can't help but take notice. Elsewhere, we've got a double-dose of E30 goodness (both cars are bagged, beautifully built and decidedly

different), a slice of old-school-cool courtesy of a seriously sexy static 2002, and no less than three generations of M3 to enjoy: a spectacular Stateside E36; a stunning UK E46; and an air-ride F80. So, please go and enjoy the magazine while the rest of the team and I get down to the task of making another one of these for you. Until next month...

Elizabeth de Latour, Editor



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The Grey

Fully fettled, fast and ferocious, this predatory M3 is hungry like the wolf...

Words: Elizabeth de Latour Photos: Steve Hall



The E46 M3 is an awesome car. It's supremely affordable, fast, a joy to drive, practical and can even be considered economical. It is arguably one of the greatest performance bargains of our time.

Unfortunately, as is often the case, when a car is good and affordable it becomes popular and when a car is popular it becomes rather difficult to make it stand out from the crowd. People will often end up doing the same sorts of mods, not because they are sheep but because those are the best mods to do. Creating something different can be quite difficult, something that affects all popular 3 Series models in particular, but James Barrett has faced that challenge head-on and emerged victorious.

Those in the UK modified BMW scene may well recognise that name because for quite some time James was the go-to guy at M Style for customers looking to spice up

their BMs. You may well recognise the car, too, because it is a show regular and has enjoyed more than its fair share of internet fame and with good reason: it's a stunner! As you may expect from someone who has been at the heart of the modified BMW scene for so long, James has a car history filled with BMWs, and it's a surprisingly varied mix of BM machinery at that. There's been an E65, an E60, an E46 and an E36 before James purchased this E46 M3 just over two years ago. It was a car he'd always wanted and so the mods began in earnest. As is often the case, the modifying avalanche was triggered by one simple act: fitting some carbon grilles. "It all went from there," chuckles James. "I had intended to leave the car in its original Titan silver after doing the carbon grilles but one of the wings was slightly off in colour; I wanted to get it taken care of but didn't want to end up chasing it round the car to try and get it to

match perfectly so I decided to do a full colour change. I wanted something that hadn't been done before, but that was subtle at the same time." The colour James settled on was Lamborghini Grigio Telesto, a spectacular solid grey, making his first E46 M3 to sport this look. Considering how unexciting grey is as a colour, it actually makes a big impact because it's so unusual and definitely makes the car stand out.

Before the respray James had managed to catch his splitter on a kerb, damaging the bumper in the process. This seemed like a good excuse to fit a CSL front bumper, always a good idea, and he also smoothed the intake hole for a cleaner look.

The interior of this particular M3 has also gone through something of a transformation. It was originally black, before James swapped in a red leather interior. However, when he decided to fit a purple roll-cage he went back to black as the red and purple simply wouldn't work together. Purple might

seem like an unlikely colour choice for the roll-cage but it was all part of James' plan. "I wanted a colour that would complement the grey," he explains. "The grey looks lighter when the sun hits it and so does the Merlin purple. I think that they work really well together. I had initially considered candy red for the cage and wheels but then I figured that it would have taken away from the stealthy look of the car." Merlin purple is (whisper it) an Audi colour but it's a darn good-looking one and quite a subtle hue, adding a flash of colour in the black and grey interior.

Speaking of wheels, the E46 M3 is a car with which it is hard to go wrong when it comes to choosing wheels. Get the right combination and everything from dish to concave can look absolutely killer. The only hard part is making an original choice – so many aftermarket wheels have been done to death already by the modifying masses. Fortunately James has nailed it with his

current choice. "I had CSL wheels originally," he says, "but silver wheels on a grey car looked odd. Plus, everyone has CSL wheels on M3s. I wanted something different and when I saw the gunmetal Quantum44 S1s I knew they were perfect." Quantum44 has produced some extremely good looking wheels but it isn't a brand that you're likely to see on every show car around, making this concave ten-spoke wheel a distinctive design. The dark colour coordinates with the overall look of the car, and the interior theme is echoed in the callipers which are finished in Merlin purple. 10mm spacers up front and 20mm items at the rear get the fitment spot-on and the 19s fill the arches perfectly thanks to the aggressive drop that James has dialled-in on his D2 Racing coilovers.

Elsewhere you may have spotted the CSL bootlid, with its smoothed badge and lock. It was fitted when the car was still silver, along with the smoked indicators, matt

I decided to do a full colour change.
I wanted something
that hadn't been done before



black roof, CSL diffuser and ACS roof spoiler. These have since been joined by a whole host of subtle but effective exterior tweaks including a full-width carbon splitter, tinted front lights with smoked inner bowls and Ummitza angel eyes, all-red LED rears and plenty of carbon touches, like the wing vents and carbon washer jet panel.

Being an M3 you'd be disappointed if there wasn't a little bit of performance boost, so you'll be pleased to hear that James has fitted a K&N induction kit with carbon intake, a Mosselman remap and a set of 100-cell sport cats while the SMG has been treated to a CSL software update for faster shifts.

At this point the car was looking pretty awesome all-round but James still wasn't finished and he now turned his attention to the interior to really finish it off. The dash and doors have been flocked, the latter offering a fantastic contrast against the gloss grey of the body-coloured door panels, and

Rear seats have been ditched and the space is now occupied by two 12" subs and a Merlin purple roll-cage



Cobra Monaco seats up front with flocked dash and Storm Motorwerks goodies



the standard seats have been unceremoniously removed and replaced with a pair of extremely sexy Cobra Monaco seats complete with Sparco three-point harnesses. The dash trims and gear lever surround have been finished in matching Lambo grey and James has also fitted a Storm Motorwerks titanium gear knob and ring plus a set of extended Rogue Engineering paddles. The rear seats have been ditched and back there you will now find a pair of 12" JL Audio subs along with a JL amp.

In just over two years James has done a lot of work and all his effort shines through as the end result is stunning. The attention to detail here is really impressive and he's paid attention to every element of the car:

the aesthetics (both inside and out); the handling; and the performance. No part of the car has gone untouched and every modification has been planned and executed with purpose and planning.

"I'm very happy with how the car has turned out," grins James, "it's exactly how I pictured it would be. I spent ages going through the various options I had at every stage, trying to visualise how it would all tie together as I really wanted to get it right." Well, he has succeeded there then, although possible plans for the future include a BBK, Quantum's new curved-spoke S5D wheels and, if funds allow, a supercharger. Whatever the future holds, one thing is for certain: this grey M3 won't be dull! ●

E46 M3

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

3.2-litre straight-six S54B32, carbon engine cover, K&N induction kit with carbon intake, 100-cell sport cats, Mosselman remap, Sprint Booster, Euro-style exhaust tips. Six-speed SMG gearbox, CSL software update

CHASSIS

8.5x19" (front) and 9.5x19" (rear) Quantum44 S1 matt gunmetal wheels with 225/35 (front) and 255/30 (rear) Falken tyres, 15mm (front) and 20mm (rear) TPI spacers, D2 Racing coilovers, Turner Motorsport subframe reinforcement kit, full Powerflex bush kit, Rogue Engineering top mounts

EXTERIOR

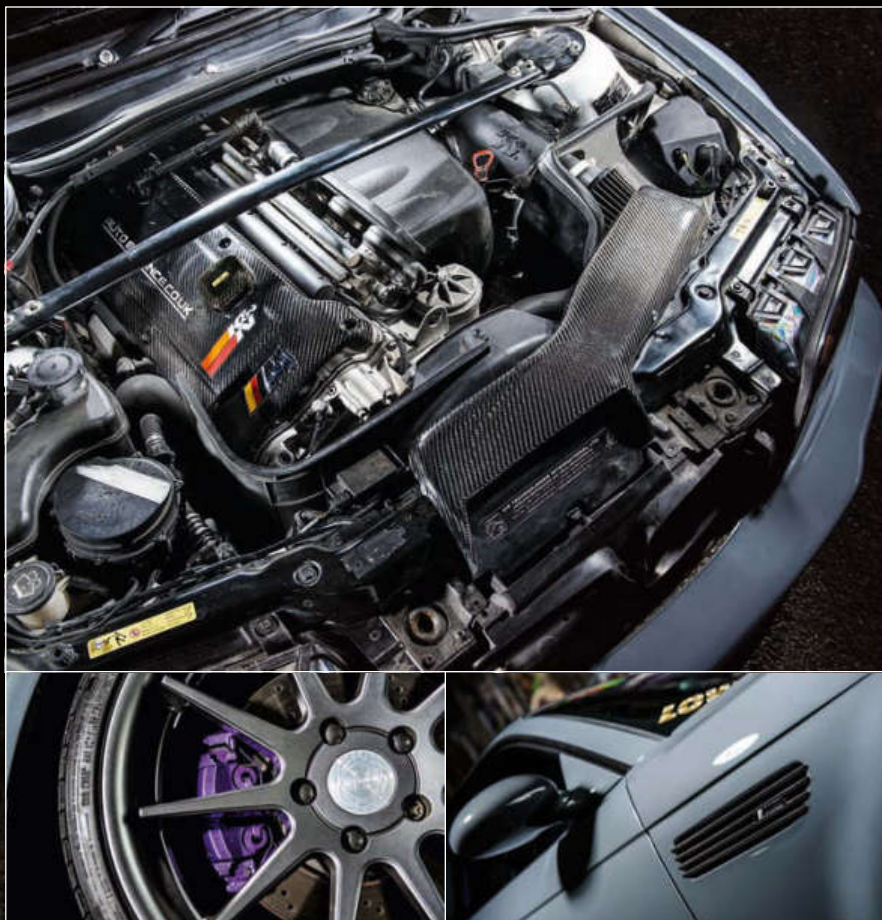
Full respray in Lamborghini Grigio Telesto, CSL front bumper with smoothed intake hole, full width carbon splitter, Lamin-x subtle tint front lights with smoked inner bowl, Umnitza Angel eyes, 8000K xenon upgrade, smoothed bonnet, CSL bootlid with smoothed badge and lock, carbon CSL diffuser, carbon wing vents, carbon kidney grilles, matt black roof, red/smoked LED rear lights, light smoke window tints, AC Schnitzer roof spoiler, carbon washer jet panel, Audi Merlin purple calipers

INTERIOR

Body coloured CSL doorcard inserts, body coloured dash trims and gear surround, flocked dash, flocked door cards, Weichers Type B half-cage painted Audi Merlin purple, Storm Motorwerks titanium SMG ring and gear knob, AC Schnitzer pedals and footrest, Rogue Engineering extended paddles, Cobra Monaco seats, Sparco three-point harnesses, rear seat delete, 2x JL audio 12" subs, JL audio amp

THANKS

Paul and the boys at MStyle for the majority of the work, Abe at Low Expectations clothing, Ad at Strictly Static, Ollie at Absolute Detailing, Ray at Absoflockinlutely, and most of all my better half Dee Barwick for putting up with my paintwork OCD and patience with me when things didn't quite go to plan!



Gunmetal Quantum44 19s are the perfect match for the paint; purple and carbon details add the finishing touches





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depending on model

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A close-up, low-angle shot of the front of a dark-colored BMW E24. The BMW roundel logo is visible on the front fender. The front wheel is in motion, creating a blurred effect. The car is on a dark, textured surface, possibly asphalt, with some dust or smoke kicked up around the wheel.

ONE STEP BEYOND

Owned for 29 years, modified over 13 years and delivering 580whp from its twin-turbo M106, this incredible E24 is pure motoring madness.

Words: Elizabeth de Latour

Photos: Dan Crosley

Here at *BMW* we are most definitely not into making assumptions but even we must admit that we did not expect this utterly insane twin-turbo 580whp E24 635i to be owned by a 68-year-old psychiatrist. Pretty much every number in that sentence is eyebrow-raising but all we can say is that we hope when we get to that age we're driving something as spectacular as this.

So, 580whp – that's a lot, especially in a car as devoid of weight and bulk as the E24 and using twin-turbos to achieve that monstrous figure is just wholly unnecessary and utterly wonderful in equal measure. This car is nothing short of an engineering masterpiece; a car owned and built by a man who is as big a petrolhead as they come; a car built without compromise or the constraints of practicality or budget. It's the 6 Series you'd build if you could.

While we're sure Rob Behrends would have loved to invite us to lie down on a couch and ask us about our mother and why we're scared of bread, this time it was our turn to delve into the mind of the man who made this monster and see just what makes him tick...

"I've been interested in cars for as long as I can remember," says Rob. "I collected automobile cards and brochures as a kid, and had several large picture book compilations of European and exotic cars." His personal car ownership took the form of a varied array of American muscle that you might expect a young motor-mad man growing up in the '60s to drive, with V8s across the board, but the first spark that

would lead him on the journey to building this 6 Series was ignited when, in 1977, he saw an advert in a car magazine for the 633CSi: "It was a two-page side view of the car at speed. The caption read: 'Cruise all day at 125 miles per hour.' I was in love. Long story short, in October of 1986 I took possession of a one-year-old Euro-spec 635CSi in Diamond Schwartz with colour-matching centre Style 5s that I imported from Germany. It had a five-speed 'box, M-Tech side skirts, headlight wipers and E9-style BMW emblems on the C-pillars. It was breathtaking! The drive home was magical. It was a unique and rare car in this area at the time. A phenomenal highway cruiser and no slouch with 218hp. I drove, loved and cherished it for 17 years. In 2002 [interesting number coincidence], I began to think about increasing its power as a project with my son Justin who had come of driving age."

Rob looked into various options – including an S88 swap – but the costs involved were prohibitive so he decided to go down the forced-induction route instead. "There was nothing off-the-shelf at the time: some companies were installing superchargers on E36s and some were casting log exhaust manifolds for turbo applications. I chose to go with a turbo for efficiency and because BMW had done so with the 745i however, in a twist of fate, the factory casting the turbo manifolds burned to the ground so I was stymied.

"Some weeks later my son and I were roaming a local junkyard looking for BMW parts and he came upon a 745i with a cracked head. It had large iridescent red Ss





A lot of time, effort, creativity, passion
and money has
been invested in this car





sprayed all over it, indicating 'save' by the yard, knowing this was something not to be crushed. My dream was suddenly alive again."

Rob rescued the 745i for \$500 and brought it to My Garage, which specialises in Euro cars. The precious engine was removed, along with numerous necessary supporting components, and the process of rebuilding it began. At the same time, the M30 was removed from the 635 and sold, and the six went off to Sports Car Restoration (SCR), which specialises in 2002s, for some serious custom work. "I had worked with SCR for custom rust repairs and paint projects on the Six in the past. Initially I wanted bodywork, paint, sport seats, a rear valence and a lower front spoiler. I had bought an Alpina spoiler, a Fittipaldi steering wheel (at a swap meet), Sparco seats, a titanium gear knob, and mounts for the six-way power seats," says Rob. "A key issue for the metal body fabrication was tyre size. The motor was going to be fitted with a Garrett T5, so there would be a lot of power. I had already purchased Fikse FM-10s; 9.5" with 265s for the back, 8.5" with 235s for the front. That was as big as I could go, even with the max offset to the inside so I had to make an executive decision to extend the flares! I was then able to widen the wheels and tyres by another inch. At that point I

was like a kid in a candy shop. Anything was possible. My sense of practicality and future responsibility were gone. Roll-cage? Sure! Metal fab side sills to replace the M-Techs? Why not? We needed two front arches anyway..."

With the bodywork complete it was time for the engine to be re-inserted and tuned. After a lot of work and some delays, Rob picked up his completed car in July of 2005. He badged it '666 CSI' and his numberplate reads 'MENTAL'.

For a while all was well but unfortunately not for long. The ceramic-coated cast log exhaust manifold cracked and the manifold that Rob purchased to replace it also cracked, taking the turbo with it, as he found out when the setup was dismantled by Steve Sarafini at Fab U This (FUT), whom the garage doing the engine work had used for exhaust work on the car. One option would have been to simply opt for a new, stronger manifold and a fresh turbo but, having come so far with this build, Rob decided to take things that little bit further. "At that point I engaged Sarafini in what turned out to be a three-year-plus project of completely redesigning the engine bay (and more) based largely on my making the decision to have two turbos." The car was dropped off with FUT and work began on

the massive new stage in the project in January of 2010. "He's a one-man-shop. He also had his bread and butter work to do. This was a complex, close tolerance project of epic proportions. It came together beautifully but slowly, over about three years, essentially redesigning the entire air flow from filters to exhaust tips and properly aligning and securing the engine, transmission and driveshaft.

"The last stage, when the 666 came home to me, was another frontier. I had no idea what was required for it to run. I looked to my son for direction, and one of his friends, Brian Hoehne of New Directions Performance, stepped up. He picked up on my passion to forge ahead and jumped on-board. He knew people where he had grown up a few towns away and brought together Steve Cohen, Brian Hall, my son, and James Moran of Backfire Fab. Brian organised and scheduled the guys and researched and sourced materials and parts. Steve Cohen, with my son Justin's help, rewired the entire car over several months. Everything original and everything new worked. I was amazed! James (Bopper as he is affectionately known), is a true custom car wizard. Of course, there were numerous hurdles and he had a huge amount of work to do. He plumbed the turbos, installed sensors for the



ECU, connected the wastegates and blow-off valve, designed a cam position sensor, tightened and marked every bolt and nut, found and eliminated leaks (oil, water, air), revamped the breather tubing, installed the Ground Control coilovers, problem-solved the turbos, fuel pump, and ECU, tuned the engine, and much, much more... but it was all worth it."

Building the 666CSi has been a bigger project than Rob could ever have envisaged when he first start looking at options for more power 13 years ago. Few of us have ever even owned car for that long, let alone spent that sort of time building a project. In a world dominated by people chasing show-ready build deadlines and hopping from project car to project car, it's pretty incredible to come across someone who has spent this long reaching his personal version of motoring nirvana.

As for the car itself, well, this 6 Series doesn't disappoint. From top to bottom, inside and out, on every level Rob has addressed every aspect of the car and created an incredible build. The car has undergone a lot of body work but the changes have all been subtle and don't spoil

the irresistible E24 styling. The extensive metal fabrication for the widened arches, side skirts and rear valence is blink-and-you'll-miss-it subtle and elsewhere Rob has had the fuel filler flap, antenna hole, rear bumper spacer and second wiper hole shaved, as well as having the arch and panel seams welded and filled. An Alpina front spoiler has been grafted on up front and there's also an unpainted carbon bonnet and custom carbon fibre spoiler intake surround, while at the back a Racing Dynamics spoiler perches on the bootlid. It all works so well, and we have to give Rob's choice of wheels a huge thumbs-up too. We're going to go out on a limb here and say that most of you probably haven't come across Fikse wheels before, but this American firm has been producing some extremely stylish designs for a long time now and the forged 18" cross-spoke FM-10s that have been fitted here, their 9.5" and 10.5" widths the reason behind the arch widening, look fantastic. They have a classic design that really suits the shape of the Six – nothing too outrageous and with a healthy dose of dish.

Inside, it's a blend of the familiar and extremely alien: classic E24 elements sitting

next to necessary additions for a car pushing out this much power. There's no missing the three-quarter roll-cage, which is attached to the frame rails at the firewall and rear shock towers, or the extremely sexy Sparco Milano seats with six-way electric adjustment and custom Pearl beige leather trim to match the rest of the interior. The Fittipaldi steering wheel has been combined with a set of AC Schnitzer pedals and handbrake lever, while there's also a weighted titanium gear knob attached to a much-needed short-shift kit. Finally, there's a custom instrument pod that houses an array of essential fuel meter gauges.

So, we should probably talk about the engine because it's a little bit special. As you might expect from a project spanning 13 years, an insane amount of work has been carried out on this M106 and it looks like some kind of thermonuclear device rather than a mere six-cylinder engine. It has been blueprinted and balanced and built with Ross forged pistons, Pauter billet rods, Total Seal rings, race bearings, and a Metric Mechanic dual profile asymmetrical sport cam. The head has been milled, pocket and chamber ported and sodium-filled over-sized

TURBO E28

ENGINE

3.5-litre straight-six M106, solid mounted, blueprinted and balanced, stock crank, Ross forged pistons, Pauter billet rods, Total Seal rings, race bearings, compression 7.7:1, Metric Mechanic dual profile asymmetrical sport cam, milled, pocket and chamber ported head, sodium filled over-sized valves, new guides, titanium retainers, F1-1000lb springs, steel head gasket, stud kit, Injector Dynamics ID1300 injectors, twin Comp CT3B ceramic ball-bearing turbos, twin-Turbosmart 40mm wastegates with custom stainless steel lines, Turbosmart 50mm blow-off valve, ATL fuel cell, dual pumps, lines, custom fuel rail, custom cam sensor, custom wheel speed sensors for rear axle for traction control, AEM infinity 10 ECU, custom software elements for adjustable boost per gear, no-lift shift, six dial-in tunes, valet mode and kill switch, Halon fire extinguisher, Snow Performance water/methanol injection system (including custom stainless tank), custom rewiring of engine and complete car, twin ceramic-coated exhaust manifolds, full custom stainless exhaust with twin 2.5" tailpipes, uprated radiator with twin electric radiator fans, custom air box in right frame rail, ceramic-coated intake piping to air-to-air intercooler and radiator, custom aluminium plenum and runners, custom aluminium coolant

expansion, hydraulic fluid and condensation tanks, custom aluminium valve cover with hidden plug wires, oil cooler with puller fan in left frame rail, custom aluminium water tubes at water pump jacket, Optima Red Top battery. 580whp and 540lb ft rear wheel torque at 1.5bar with water/meth injection (22-23psi) and MS109

TRANSMISSION

Getrag S6S 420G six-speed gearbox from Euro E34 M5, solid mounted, SPEC Stage 5 clutch, differential reinforced by a ¼" steel C-shaped bolted bracket welded to a ¼" steel plate on the boot floor and bolted to crossmembers which go to the rear shock towers/roll-cage, custom stainless rear strut brace

CHASSIS

9.5x18" (front) and 10.5x18" (rear) Fikse FM-10 wheels with 265/35ZR18 (front) and 295/35ZR18 (rear) Michelin Pilot Super Sport tyres, Ground Control coilovers, front suspension fully polybushed, rear suspension solid mounted and polybushed, custom aluminium front strut brace, custom UUC BBK comprising four-pot calipers with 355mm two-piece grooved discs (front) and four-pot calipers with 350mm

grooved disc (rear), 22mm anti-roll bars, line lock on front brakes

EXTERIOR

Custom metal fabrication by Sports Car Restoration including flared arches, side sills and rear valance with exhaust scallops, shaved fuel filler door, antenna hole, rear bumper spacer, second wiper hole, welded/filled arch and panel seams, Alpina (lower) front spoiler, PIAA three-way running lights, custom carbon fibre bonnet and spoiler intake surround, Racing Dynamics rear wing

INTERIOR

Custom instrument pod, fuel gauges, short-shift kit, titanium (weighted) gear knob, AC Schnitzer pedals and handbrake lever, six-way power Sparco Milano seats custom covered in Pearl beige, Fittipaldi steering wheel, new tool kit, three-quarter roll-cage attached to the frame rails at firewall and rear shock towers, Escort Passport Max radar detector, Directed SmartStart System

THANKS

My son Justin, My Garage, Sports Car Restoration, Fab U This, Backfire Fab, New Directions Performance, and European Performance Labs



“At that point I was like a
kid in a candy shop.
Anything was possible...”



valves have been fitted along with new guides, titanium retainers and F1-1000lb springs, along with a steel head gasket and stud kit, with the compression ratio reduced to 7.7:1. Somewhere deep within the bowels of the bay sit the turbos: a pair of Comp CT3B ceramic ball bearing items mounted on twin ceramic-coated manifolds, mated to twin Turbosmart 40mm wastegates with custom stainless steel lines and Turbosmart 50mm blow-off valve. The fuel system needed some serious upgrading and is now running Injector Dynamics ID1300 injectors with fuel by Marren Injection Systems, ATL fuel cell, dual pumps, lines and a custom fuel rail. There's also a Snow Performance water/methanol injection system with a custom stainless steel tank. A custom air box has been fabbed in the right frame rail and there's aluminium intake piping to the air-to-air intercooler and radiator with custom aluminium plenum and runners. Look further and you'll find a custom aluminium coolant expansion tank, a hydraulic fluid tank and a condensation tank. A custom aluminium valve cover with hidden plug wires is a nice touch, while there's also an oil cooler with a puller fan in the left frame rail and custom aluminium water tubes at the water pump jacket.

The icing on the cake is the AEM Infinity 10 ECU with an awesome array of functions including traction control, adjustable boost

per gear, no-lift shift, and six dial-in tunes.

This incredible list of engine mods all play their part in helping the car make that aforementioned figure of 580whp along with 540lb ft of torque at the rear wheels at 1.5bar on MS109 fuel with the water/meth running. All that power makes its way to the Tarmac via a Getrag S6S 420G six-speed gearbox from a Euro E34 M5, SPEC Stage 5 clutch and a pair of 295 Michelin Pilot Super Sports. Due to the vast amount of power and torque that the E24 now has to deal with the chassis has undergone some serious strengthening to help it cope. The diff is reinforced by a 1/4" steel, C-shaped bolted bracket welded to a 1/4" steel plate on the boot floor and bolted to cross members which go to the rear shock towers/roll-cage. There's a custom rear strut brace, the engine and transmission are solid mounted along with most of the rear suspension, with some components mounted on polybushes, and the whole front has also been fully polybushed. Ground Control coilovers offer a gentle drop and a massive improvement in handling while the standard brakes are long gone, replaced by a custom UUC BBK with four-pot calipers front and rear and 355mm two-piece grooved discs up front with 350mm items out back. There are also thicker anti-roll bars and a line lock kit has been fitted on the front brakes, making those all important burnouts a breeze.

The story of Rob's 635 is one of highs and

lows and while there were moments when the end seemed like it would never be in sight, 13 years on from that great decision to get some more power from his Six, here we stand with one of the most incredible builds we've ever come across. "It has been a long and winding road; not easy at times," muses Rob. "Overall, I'm relieved and happy it's together and working. A lot of time, effort, creativity, passion and money has been invested in this car. I'm still totally crazy [mental?] about it." Looking at that numberplate, whoever said Americans don't get irony? And as for the moniker on the back of the car, well, we'll let Rob explain: "666CSi has a double meaning. With the 745i, and, of course, the newer models, BMW has taken a liberty with the displacement representation related to forced induction, and 6.6-litres isn't that outlandish, I thought."

This devilish 6 Series, then, is no longer that comfortable, refined GT that it was back in 1985 but we wager that Rob too is a very different man from the one that started out on this journey 30 years ago. This car, much like its owner, defies convention and expectations and while to the outside observer it might seem plain crazy to have spent so much time and money creating this car, in our world of modified cars where we're all a little bit crazy he fits right in ●



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CALIFORNIA DREAMING

Having finally acquired his dream car, Californian resident Tracy Arnett got to work on making the best even better.

Words: Louise Woodhams Photos: Richard Le



At the age of 29, Tracy Arnett hasn't done too badly – as well as this stunning M3 he also owns a 2013 335i M Sport and a 2014 i3. And unlike some of our US feature cars, he has built this project on the back of his own financial success. Shortly after graduating from San Francisco State University he put his business degree to good use. You see, after being a victim of fraud he hired a law firm to get his credit

on track. However, after six months, he still wasn't seeing the results that he was expecting, so he took matters into his own hands. Whilst working two jobs with limited free time, he managed to accomplish far more than the so-called experts that he previously called upon. It was then that he realised he had a knack for credit repair, and Sacramento Inquiry Removal (SIR) was born.

"It was the best decision I've ever made,"

stated Tracy. Like any new start-up it was tough in the beginning with Tracy having to do all of the work himself and handling his client's disputes and record-keeping manually. "I was writing every letter by hand and it took forever. It was a pain trying to organise all of the client files, and as a result I was working 16-hour days." He knew that something needed to change if he wanted to grow his business, and two years ago he discovered Credit Repair Cloud. After



transferring his business to the cloud, his long days of endlessly processing client files were over. With the new client portal he could scale the business as he wanted. Now, just four years after SIR was established, he has three people on his team and is looking to recruit more. "I now only work a few hours a day. I'm very happy; as well as watching my business grow I'm also to spend more time with my family and modifying cars.

"I have been interested in BMWs for as long as I can remember. I first got one in 2007 when one of my clients – the owner of a BMW dealership – told me if I bought one from him he would give me an amazing deal. It was a 2007 328i sedan and since then I've never driven anything else. There is never a moment when I'm not happy driving a BMW."

To date, Tracy has owned over 60 cars and pretty much all of them have been

modified in one way or another. "I had an Infiniti G35 that was heavily tuned and was a lot of fun but it just wasn't a BMW," he confessed.

When he got word that the new M3 would be coming out he went straight to his local dealer last year and placed an order. "I've always wanted an M3 and as I was in a good position to afford one I decided to pull the trigger." As he had already bagged the 335i on HRE wheels, complete with a raft of



F80 M3

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

3.0-litre twin-turbo straight-six S55B30, Magnaflow exhaust, Evolution Racing downpipes and JB4 map, six-speed manual gearbox

CHASSIS

10x20" (front) and 11x20" (rear) brushed titanium Rohana RC1 deep concave wheels with 255/35 (front) and 275/30 (rear) Toyo tyres, AirREX Digital Air suspension

EXTERIOR

Imperial Works Matte red wrap, RFsplitters916 custom-made front, rear and side splitters, roof, aerial, kidney and side grilles, mirrors, bootlip, M3 badge and window surrounds painted/wrapped gloss black, tinted windows

INTERIOR

Suede trimmed boot enclosure with Lightning Audio amp and Rockford Fosgate P2 12" subs

THANKS

AirREX, Imperial Works, Rohana Wheels, Magnaflow, RFsplitters916, Autosport209, Rey Felipe and Zach Felipe for helping me install all of the parts and putting up with my craziness

DATA FILE

M Performance parts, he decided to make the M3 its twin. With the desire for the delivery of his brand-new car to be a truly magical experience, he asked for the dealership to deliver it complete with the plastic shipping wraps so he could have it detailed himself. As a car care enthusiast the vehicle presentation standards in the motor trade can often fall short of expectations and while we are almost certain that a BMW handover would go smoothly, Tracy didn't want to risk any fresh swirl marks or fine scratches. Fair enough.

Now the modifying could begin. First up were H&R Super Sport springs to get the drop that he was looking for. After the 2014 SEMA show, however, Tracy decided to swap out the suspension for a full AirREX Digital Air system offering three programmable ride height presets. It was spec'd with wireless digital remote operation, as Tracy likes the convenience of being able to have his car ultra-low at shows. Not surprisingly it's his favourite mod. "As AirREX is built to perform, it doesn't compromise the handling at all; in fact, it's a blast to drive – completely different to the 335i," revealed Tracy.

As there wasn't much available for the car when he took delivery of it he had RFsplitters916 custom-make front, rear and side splitters. "You'd struggle to find better work elsewhere. The company's craftsmanship is excellent and complements



the M3's bodywork perfectly," states Tracy. With the bags installed, all it needed now was a colour change; originally Alpine white the new hue would need to make the car stand out but not distract from the bold lines. Tracy eventually decided on matt red, with the team at Imperial Works helping him to decide which parts to wrap or paint in a contrasting colour. As such you'll find that the car's roof and aerial, kidney and side grilles, mirrors, bootlip, M3 badge and window surrounds are all gloss black. Together with tinted windows, the end result is nothing short of stunning, and as well as complimenting the Sakhir orange

interior the vinyl also protects the front of the car from stone chips – a godsend for a stickler like Tracy.

The finishing touch was a set of brushed titanium Rohana RC1 wheels, as they offered the size and level of concave that Tracy was after. Measuring an impressive 10x20" up front and 11x20" out back, wrapped in Toyo 255/35 and 275/30 rubber respectively, with the car at maximum drop the wheels really set off the M3's tough look.

If there's one thing that enthusiasts complain about with the new M3 and M4, it is the exhaust. A lot of people miss that V8 sound, including Tracy. Of course, factors

11x20" concave Rohana wheels do an awesome job of filling the M3's swollen rear arches



There is never a moment when
I'm not happy
driving a BMW



such as turbocharging and a different configuration under the body also contributed to a new, different sound. BMW tried to remedy the inline-six exhaust note with Active Sound Design (ASD), a device that was widely criticised. No true petrolhead appreciates a fake engine sound being pumped into the cockpit, and Tracy's solution was a Magnaflow exhaust with Evolution Racing downpipes.

He also opted for a JB4 map offering up an additional 160hp. The JB4 installation is completely removable with no splicing or cutting of factory wires and allows you to go

from factory stock to full race mode (and everywhere in between) at the push of a button on your steering wheel. The JB4 is easy to install (or remove, if required) and includes many unique features including user-adjustable first and second gear boost limiting, map switching in the dash, electronic wastegate control, ethanol fuel support, and built-in advanced CANbus-based diagnostic tools.

Of course, money no object, Tracy tells us he would have opted for bigger turbos or a V8 engine swap but for now, he's very happy with what he's achieved over just a

few months. He has a few other plans for it in the pipeline, including a BMW Performance diffuser, a BMS Performance intake, a set of 19" Art In Motion wheels, Bride seats and a half cage, as he'd like to track the car.

He's now looking to buy a new M5 or an M6 (as well as an Audi R8) and he plans to modify both cars as much as he can – so we guess his credit rating must be well on track now! Just make sure you come back Tracy and show us the finished results, and that whatever Bavarian choice of weapon you go for, it's a four-ring beater! ●



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HERE COMES THE 'BOOM

Words: Elizabeth de Latour

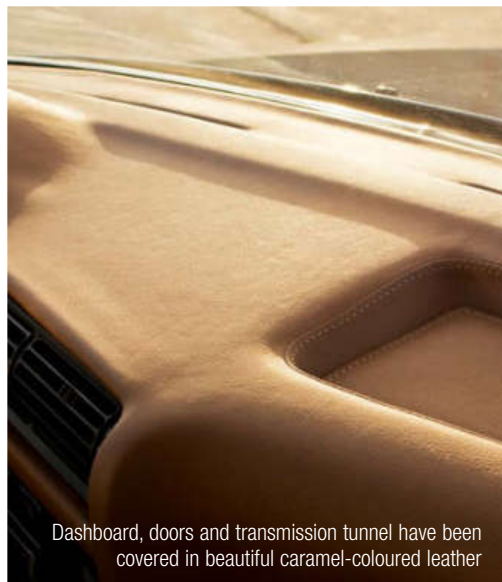
Photos: Kevin Raekelboom

If you like your E30s to be jaw-droppingly spectacular, you're going to enjoy this one .

Not only is Belgium resident Kevin Raekelboom a talented photographer with one of the best names in the business, he also has a talent for building utterly spectacular project cars. His last effort was a bagged E21 that we featured back in June '13 and over the past year and a bit he's been at it again, building the E30 you see before you here. Kevve's approach when it comes to builds is most definitely of the 'all-out' variety and it's certainly working for him.

His E21 had been a mix of classic exterior elegance contrasting with an adventurous carbon and Kevlar interior mix, which created a striking juxtaposition. For his next project, Kevve decided to push the boat out just that little bit further... Step one was choosing a car. Here he decided to keep it 3 Series; it had served him well before, after all, and he had the perfect project car starting point in the family: an unassuming 1983 six-cylinder 320i manual that surely had no idea what was about to happen to it. "I bought it from my brother who didn't have the time for it," explains Kevve. "He bought it two years ago to restore it but then he bought a house and did a lot of construction on it and had no more time for the car. It was in pretty good condition but needed some attention."

The engine here has been left completely stock, as this is very much a visual exercise, though Kevve has had a straight-through custom exhaust made, which handily meant



Dashboard, doors and transmission tunnel have been covered in beautiful caramel-coloured leather



Interior has been stripped of all audio, carpets and rear seats, with cage and Kirkey seats added



that there was no need to worry about any sort of audio upgrades: “There’s no need for music with an engine sound like this!” So, with all efforts and energy channelled into the aesthetics, it’s no surprise that the finished article is so utterly spectacular.

Having bagged his previous build, Kevve knew that his next project would also be on air-ride but with an E30 that’s no simple task. “There was nothing standard available for the car off-the-shelf at the time,” he explains, “so I had to go with a custom air suspension setup. Thanks must go to Kean Suspensions for helping and supplying the parts for this. I don’t know how much lower it is than standard but it touches the floor with the engine, front lip and exhaust line, so can’t go any lower.”

There are numerous exterior modifications, some obvious, others less so. For example, the inner wheel arches have been widened both front and back and you may or may not notice that the passenger-side mirror has been removed. The front-end is a very clever mix of elements – Kevve has opted for a face-lifted front but matched to a pre-facelift bumper onto which he’s grafted a DTM front

lip – giving the car a face that spans two incarnations of the E30 and then spears off on a motorsport tilt, further reinforced by the addition of the Speedhunters towing strap. The finishing touch is the set of four original OE Hella yellow headlights which not only add a flash of retro charm but also offer a fantastic contrast to the all-grey exterior.

Ah yes, that paint. For such a special

“It touches the floor with the engine, front lip and exhaust line, so can’t go any lower”

project a special hue was needed and after a bit of searching, the decision was made to go for Lamborghini Grigio Telesto (the same as the E46 M3 on p8). “I saw it on a Lamborghini Gallardo in Las Vegas and fell in love,” says Kevve. This is an awesome shade of solid grey with incredible impact yet it’s surprisingly rich and light enough to allow

the light to pick up on the details in the bodywork. It looks fantastic on the classic E30 shape and really makes it stand out.

Of course, choose the wrong wheels and nothing else will matter, regardless of how much effort you’ve put into making your car look amazing, so making the right choice was incredibly important for this project. There was never any doubt in our minds that Kevve would do anything other than blow us all away with his wheel selection and he’s done exactly that with these utterly gorgeous VIP Modular VXS210s. “I’ve always loved these VIP Modular wheels,” says Kevve, “and I wanted something else other than the BBS RS wheels. Don’t get me wrong, I had them on the E21 but I wanted to step up the game and try something different.”

When it comes to wheel selection on E30s, size matters; but it’s a case of going too big that can often be the problem, so these VIPs measure a modest 17” across and a very reasonable 8”-wide up front and 9” at the rear. Their finish is utterly mesmerising – a gloss copper that looks incredible in the sunlight, rich and warm.



“I wanted to step up the game and try something different”



Matching centre caps and the step lips help to further catch the light and add an extra visual dimension to the wheels. Going for a single colour across the entire wheel is a brave, bold move that can look incredible with the right colour and it's definitely working here. As a final subtle touch, the bolts are finished in gold, adding a little something extra that only the most eagle-eyed observer will be able to spot. The contrast against the expanse of grey bodywork is incredible and the overall effect is stunning.

So, the outside delivers a big visual hit thanks to some amazing details in an otherwise clean and simple style but the interior certainly holds its own. It's actually difficult to know where to start here, there's so much work that has gone into transforming the cabin. The carpets are gone, there's not a single strand of fibre left across the entire interior, and everything that would have once been carpeted has now been painted matt black. The rear seats have been removed and in their place sits a Wiechers roll-cage, while the front seats have been replaced with a pair of the most alien sport seats out there – all-metal Kirkeys, which look utterly mental. They also look incredibly uncomfortable but are actually meant to be pretty gentle on your butt; Kevve drove this car over to the UK

from Belgium for the Players Classic show, so that tells you a lot. The deep-dish sport steering wheel is the perfect partner for the no-frills, no-nonsense seats but the vast expanse of caramel leather offers a delicious luxury contrast. The entire dashboard, doorcards and mid-tunnel are lovingly coated in the buttery soft and beautiful leather. It's quite literally like the fondant topping on an already amazing cake and gives the incredible interior one more layer, one more tasty treat to enjoy.

Kevve's E30 is an astonishing machine built to an incredible standard but, based on his tenure with the E21, we had the feeling that the E30 wasn't going to be hanging around long for him to enjoy... and that's exactly what happened. Despite the vast amount of time, effort and, of course, money Kevve's spent on this car, after just a mere few months of pleasure with it, he's now sold it to an enthusiast right here in the UK. Fortunately, Kevve's pretty pragmatic about the whole situation: “I only drove the E30 once a month and I really needed space in my garage so it had to go.

“I don't know what's next. I'm focussing on my business at the moment but I'll probably build something for Wörthersee.” Whatever that ends up being, you can guarantee it's going to be awesome. We can't wait... ●



E30 320i

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

2.0-litre straight-six M20B20, custom straight-through exhaust, five-speed manual gearbox

CHASSIS

8x17" (front) and 9x17" (rear) VIP Modular VXS210 copper coloured wheels with gold bolts with 185/30 (front) and 195/40 (rear) Nankang NS20 tyres, custom air suspension built from scratch with AccuAir management, Viair compressors, refurbished brakes throughout

EXTERIOR

Custom respray in Lamborghini Grigio Telesto, widened inner wheel arches (front and back), new face-lift front with pre-face-lift bumper, DTM front lip, all towing hooks removed, Speedhunters towing strap, windscreen wipers removed, original OEM Hella yellow headlights, deleted right hand mirror

INTERIOR

Carpets removed, floor surfaces painted matt black, rear seats removed, Wiechers roll-cage, Kirkey racing seats, leather-trimmed dashboard, doorcards and mid-tunnel, built-in air gauges, deep-dish sport steering wheel

THANKS

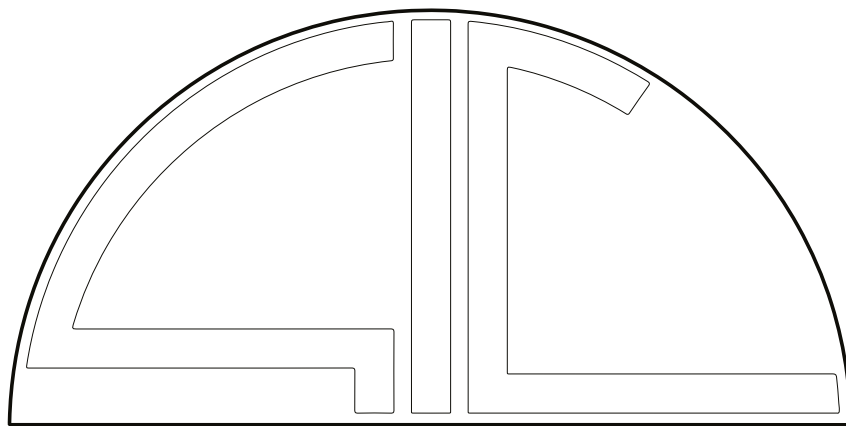
A massive thanks must go to my brother who helped me with loads of things on the car, even during the long nights working hard to get it ready, my girlfriend for the many, many hours together in the garage working on the car and helping me find parts on the internet, my sister for picking up parts for me everywhere, my brother-in-law for helping me with building the seat rails, John for painting the car, Kean Suspensions for supplying the air suspension parts, Christophe from Sexy Wheels for getting the VIP Modular Wheels

DATA FILE

This E30 is about as low as you can go and looks absolutely incredible aired out



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FIVE SERIES DEATH PUNCH

With massive turbocharged power wrapped up
in unassuming E28 looks, this 5 Series
is one deadly road warrior.

Words: Elizabeth de Latour Photos: Hjalmar van Hoek

Turbo E28s are like buses: you wait ages for one to come along and then three awesome feature cars turn up in the same year. But as fans of all things E28 (and turbocharged) we're most definitely not complaining. It probably won't surprise you to learn that this E28 hails from Sweden, as there seems to be something in the Scandinavian water that makes BMW fans shut themselves away over the long winters and emerge blinking into the spring sunshine having crafted some form of forced induction beast over the preceding months. Works for us.

By day, Gunay Selmanovski is busy repairing Volvos but by night, and possibly also on weekends, he can be found

thundering around the Swedish countryside in this beast of an E28. It's his first project on this scale, his previous cars having all been modified but none beyond some lowering springs, bigger wheels and an exhaust, so he's really done an awesome job. He has owned the car for ten years now, purchasing it as a "poor student" (his words) at the tender age of 21. "The performance for the price was unbeatable," he says, "and it was a great combination of handling, power, convenience, luxury and comfort – it really is the ultimate driving machine."

Purchased with no plans other than simply enjoying the driving and ownership experience, all that changed when Gunay stumbled upon an M106. That makes this the second car in this issue running that engine







(the other is 666CSi on p18) and the third this year – clearly, it's the current go-to choice for a big-power straight-six.

Gunay has been working on the car since 2005, starting out in a rented garage before it was moved to his dad's garage in 2010, and this E28 has come a long way from the rusty and rather sorry state that he purchased it in all those years ago.

The M106 in particular has undergone quite a transformation, with one year being spent on it alone, and while it is an excellent starting point for a turbo project, thanks to its force-induced foundations, serious upgrades are required if you're hunting for serious power. The bottom end has remained stock, as have the internals, and Gunay has focussed all his attention on the

head, porting it before adding a copper gasket with an ARP stud kit, fitting an M7 300/300 camshaft, HD rocker arms and Stage 2 valve springs. For the turbo, Gunay has chosen the beefy Precision 6265, more than enough to produce the kind of power figures he was gunning for, which has been fitted with a 60mm wastegate and 2.5" screamer pipe, along with a 50mm blow-off valve. A 600x300x76mm intercooler sits up front, feeding air into a rebuilt M5 S38 plenum, and is joined by an uprated Griffin aluminium radiator with a 385mm Spal electric fan and a 30-line oil cooler. On the fuel front, a pair of Bosch 044 pumps feed 1260cc Precision injectors. Gunay's hard work under the bonnet means a spectacular 655whp and 629lb ft of torque at the wheels,

monstrous figures considering how light the E28 is. The transmission has been seriously beefed-up to cope with all that grunt, with the old five-speed gearbox having been replaced with a rebuilt Getrag 420G gearbox taken from an E46 M3 and mated to a Sachs six-puck sintered clutch and 765 pressure plate. The propshaft is from an E34 540, rebuilt with a bigger joint and 94mm CV joint, and it's connected to a refurbished 210 40% locking LSD in a reinforced housing on a reinforced E28 M5 diff mount with stronger driveshafts.

Aesthetically, Gunay's E28 is most pleasing – there's just something so right about the way it sits and looks. There's a purpose and muscularity to its stance and appearance that we like. When he bought it, the car was

TURBO E28

ENGINE

3.4-litre straight-six M106, stock bottom end, copper ring head gasket, ARP studs, ported M106 head, M7 300/300 camshaft, HD rocker arms, Stage 2 valve springs, Precision 6265 turbo, 60mm wastegate with 2.5" screamer pipe, 50mm blow-off valve, 600x300x76mm intercooler, E34 M5 3.8 throttle bodies, rebuilt E34 M5 3.8 plenum, Innovate MTX-I wideband lambda, 1260cc Precision fuel injectors, Nuke Blackline fuel rail, Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator, Nuke fuel filter, Griffin aluminium radiator, 30-line oil cooler, Allstar crankcase ventilation, 65°C thermostat, 385mm Spal electric fan, 2x Bosch 044 fuel pumps, in-tank Deutchwerk DW301, 1.5-litre catch tank, steel braided fuel hoses, Autronic SMC, Autronic boost control, MSD Digital 4 ignition amplifier, 3 Accel Ignition waste-spark coils, MSD 8.5mm silicon ignition cables, 3.5" stainless steel downpipe from turbo with titanium exhaust wrap, 3" exhaust system, Ferrita silencer, titanium turbo blanket, 655whp @ 6200rpm, 629lb ft at the wheels @ 4400rpm

TRANSMISSION

Getrag 420G six-speed manual gearbox from E46 M3, Sachs six-puck unsprung sintered clutch disc, Sachs 765 pressure plate, rebuilt propshaft from E34 540i with bigger joint and bigger 94mm CV-joint, refurbished 210mm 40% locking LSD diff, reinforced diff housing, reinforced E28 M5 diff mount, stronger driveshafts

CHASSIS

9x18" (front) and 10x18" (rear) OZ Futura wheels with 215/35 (front) and 225/35 (rear) tyres, D2 Racing Sport modified coilovers, Powerflex front and rear bushes, E28 M5 25mm anti-roll bar (front) and 18mm anti-roll bar (rear) with Powerflex bushes, E32 750 brake master cylinder, E32 750 four-piston calipers with 324x30mm ventilated discs (front) and E34 540 calipers with 300x20mm ventilated discs (rear), steel braided brake hoses all-round

EXTERIOR

Original BMW M Tech body kit, M rear spoiler, E12-style chrome trim on the grille

INTERIOR

Pearl beige leather Sport seats, refurbished M Tech 1 steering wheel, illuminated six-speed M gear knob, M5 E28 door sills, Alpina dashboard, Innovate boost gauge, oil pressure and oil temperature gauges

THANKS

I would like to thank my parents for letting me work on my car at their garage, thanks for all of my friends that helped me and supported me with the tech and other stuff, and thanks for my beautiful wife for putting up with my hobbies

"I always wanted these wheels and had them in 17". However, when I came across a set of refurbished 18s I bought them straight away"

wearing the BMW side skirts but was missing the front and rear bumper additions, so they've now been added. So too has a rear spoiler and, while most people are busy getting rid of their chrome trim, Gunay has not only kept the shiny window surrounds but has also added an E12-style front grille chrome trim. It all combines to give the car a classic, period look.

On the suspension front, Gunay wanted a set of D2 Street coilovers but at the time there was nothing available off-the-shelf, so he bought an E34 set and modified the dampers to fit the E28. His ride-height is perfect, as is his choice of wheels in the shape of a set of OZ Futuras. "I always wanted these wheels," he says, "and had them in 17". However, when I came across a





set of refurbished 18s I bought them straight away." Measuring 9"-wide up front and 10" at the rear, they fill the E28's arches perfectly, though considering how much power he's running, Gunay has not been afraid to go for some stretch, with 215 and 225 rear tyres. Underneath the car has been fully polybushed while thicker E28 M5 anti-roll bars have also been fitted, front and rear. The uprated brakes have been sourced from within the BMW family: an E32 750 brake master cylinder has been fitted with E32 750 four-piston front calipers and 324mm discs, while at the back are a pair of E34 540i brakes. Braided steel hoses have been fitted all-round.

Finally, for the interior, Gunay has kept things simple and original with minium

modifications. The Pearl beige interior with its Sport seats has been untouched, there's a period refurbished M Tech 1 steering wheel, E28 M5 door sills, an Alpina dashboard, an illuminated six-speed M gear knob and the finishing touch is a trio of gauges.

What Gunay has built is a magnificent sleeper. There really is nothing here to give the game away, beyond the noise perhaps, and he relishes showing modern performance machinery a clean pair of heels, much to their owners' consternation. "I have embarrassed an E60 M5, a Mercedes E55 AMG and an E90 M3 on the motorway, and the look on the owner's faces was priceless," he grins. It's been a long build for this E28 but Gunay's skills as a mechanic have shone through and he's over the moon

with the machine he's created. Beyond the performance, unsurprisingly his favourite part of the whole, it's an incredibly clean E28 and that in itself is something of a rarity and definitely worth celebrating as the vast majority of these have now succumb to terminal tin worm that very few owners, other than enthusiasts, will be willing to spend money removing. "When I took the car to its first show everyone said they had never seen an E28 in that condition and with such a clean engine," says Gunay. Most importantly, this car is now finished: everything that needed to be done has been done and now comes the very serious task of getting out there and enjoying the hell out of it – something else that Gunay is extremely good at ●

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Star of CCTV

Josh Berger's E36 M3 is a luxurious show-stopper in a post-apocalyptic frenzy of eyes and ears. That it's also hilarious fun to drive seems to be merely a fringe benefit...

Words: Daniel Bevis Photos: Mike Kuhn



George Orwell had a paradoxical eye on this car back in 1949. When his frighteningly prescient dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* hit the shelves, the idea of an all-pervading culture of authoritarian surveillance shocked and disturbed, seeming inconceivable to a post-war society of scarcity and simplicity. And yet it's pretty much come true: every facet of your modern existence is performed before a lens. It's never a surprise to learn that any act, movement or indiscretion has been backed up on a hard-drive somewhere. We barely notice those yellow triangular signs any more, we just assume we're being watched. And there are three ways to react to this: you do the

Orwellian thing and toe the line, never putting a foot wrong for fear of reprisals; you rebel, throwing authority's diktat back in its face, and screw the consequences; or you follow the example of Josh Berger, the gentleman in the driving seat of this E36 M3, and just get on with things. Make yourself happy. The world is watching, so what's the point in not being yourself?

Josh has always found himself under scrutiny and observation, it doesn't bother him any. "I grew up heavily influenced by extreme sports and motorsports," he explains. "I raced dirt bikes, ATVs, snowmobiles, and pretty much anything with an engine." All of which sets him squarely in the searchlight – these are noisy,

visible sports, the sort of thing that doesn't easily blend you into the white noise of everyday society. And it was only natural that this exuberance would lead him into the colourful world of modified BMW ownership, right? We're all somewhere along that path, after all. We know the score.

"I got my first BMW at the age of 17," he says, "which was a nice little E30 'Vert that I lightly modified before moving onto an E34. E36s were always one of my favourites, though, and a few of my family members had some really nice M3s which is what got me hooked. At age 19 I bought my first E36... and it was a total sh*tbox! It had primer, bondo, scrapes, the interior was trashed, all of that stuff. After four years of



E36 M3

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

3.0-litre straight-six S50B30US, AFE Magnaforce Stage 2 air intake, polished head with five-angle valves, Turner Motorsports chip, full 3" straight-through de-cat exhaust, five-speed manual gearbox, UUC M5 clutch

CHASSIS

9.5x17" ET4 (front) and 10.5x17" ET9 (rear) CCW LM5T wheels with brushed faces with satin clear and polished lips (3.5" front; 4.5" rear), 215/40 (front) and 235/40 (rear) Nexen tyres, polished ARP bolts, Broadway Static 500 Series coilovers with 16-18k spring rates, Driftworks front camber shim kit, Megan Racing rear camber arms (-8 degrees of camber at rear, -6 degrees at front), factory-sized StopTech grooved discs, Hawk Performance pads, steel braided lines, carbon-fibre brake duct with carbon-fibre backing plate

EXTERIOR

Body resto and respray in Arctic silver, all four arches pulled 1", all new weatherstripping, new glass, lightly smoked corner lenses and rear lights by Depo, OEM headlights running 6000K HID's, AC Schnitzer Duraflex front lip, '95 M3 Sport centre grille, OEM paint-matched fog blanks and black kidney grilles, custom modified Lotus Evora rear diffuser

INTERIOR

Black Vader seats, ZHP gear knob, OEM centre console with armrest delete, OEM radio-cassette

THANKS

Thanks to my wife and family for all their support in this project. Also huge thanks to everyone who made this build possible: my BEAST COBB Squad, Tim at TL Collision for the paint, Dan Ho for the help on bodywork/suspension/fitment, Geordie at Butler Tire, John at Fastlane for his continued mechanical support, John at Global Imports BMW for the OEM parts hookup, and all my friends who have turned wrenches on this thing with me. Much love!

work to get it up to scratch, and about \$25k, the car was completely resculpted to my liking – before a drunk-driver decided to slam into it while it was parked and totalled it. So it began again. I bought another chassis, swapped all the parts over to it, got it a fresh coat of paint and I had another nice E36 for a while. After a year or so I sold it and went in and out of several other cars, experimenting with new ideas, as you do."

It was around this time that Josh started working at Atlanta Motorsports Park as a driving instructor, and soon enough had the urge for another E36 M3. Again, he's in a pretty visible position in a role like that, and he's not showing any wallflower tendencies, is he? "I told myself that this time was going to be different," he recalls. "At this point I had just got married, and my wife was expecting a baby girl, too. But that didn't stop my dad and I from trying to find a great little track car... lo and behold, we found this little gem online. It belonged to another father/son duo who used it for HPDE (High Performance Driver Education) and track days. The car was pretty rough, showing all its years on the track, with thousands of stone chips peppering the whole front of the car; the



Lotus Evora diffuser has been modified to fit the rear bumper

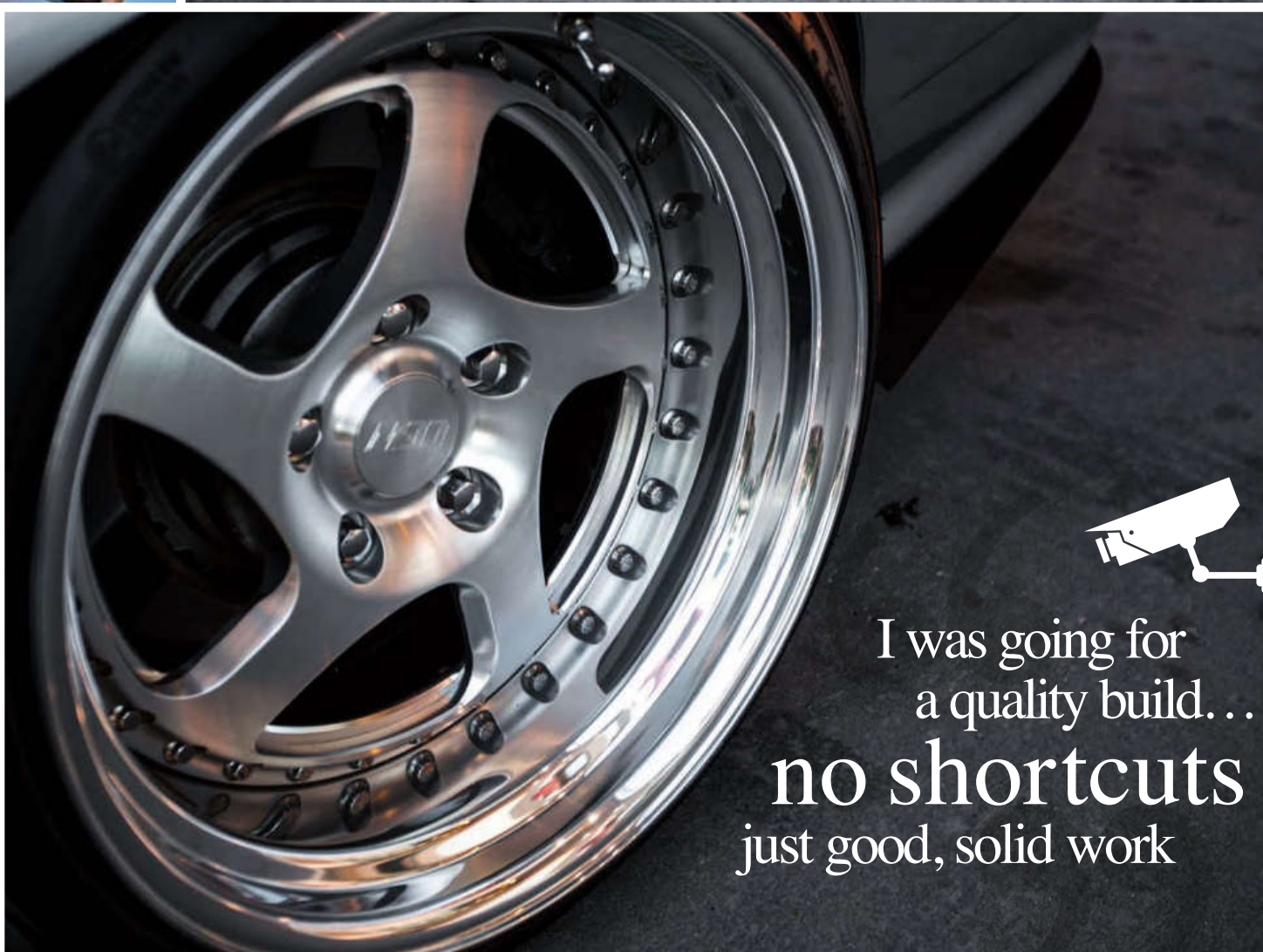
interior was half-gutted. It was perfect!"

A quick test-drive was all that it took to convince the guys that this was the ideal base for their project, warts-and-all, and a truckload of extra parts sweetened the deal, along with comprehensive service info documenting the car's entire history. The plan in embryo was to spin the thing up into a budget track car for weekend use, although life got in the way, as it's so compelled to do, and Josh found himself yearning for a change of pace. "After a few months of it just sitting there after the birth of my daughter, I decided to slow things down a little bit and enjoy some time with my friends doing the 'low and slow' thing," he says. "And so it began..."

Everyday life for Josh involves running an exotic and luxury car dealership by the name of GAS Motorcars, just outside Atlanta, Georgia. A mosey through the company's stock list reveals such swanky trinkets as 356 Speedsters, Merc 600 Grossers, modern Ferraris and classic '50s Chevys. When you're

surrounded by this sort of metal, you clearly get a keen sense of quality, finish and finesse. And it's this environment that dictated the logical direction of the forlorn M3. It also helped the car's character that it was specced with the Luxury Package (as opposed to the Sport Package which was, er, sportier); while the engine, transmission and suspension were the same, the Lux came from the dealer with unique wood trim inside, different non-twisty sideskirts, alternative doorcards and seat leather without M-stripes, and a raft of style changes to accentuate the premium accent. So, a concours-standard build to luxurious spec it was, then. Decision made.

As the myriad CCTV cameras refocused on the transmuted M3, Josh started to draw up a plan of action. And sorting the suspension had to be the first thing on the list. He was eager to get the thing nice and low but also retain a decent level of ride quality – essential if you have a tiny person



I was going for
a quality build...
no shortcuts
just good, solid work

to ferry about – and that’s where the experts at Broadway Statics came into play, their 500 Series coilovers fitting the bill perfectly. “I was going for a quality build this time – no shortcuts, just good, solid work,” Josh says with a deservedly heightened level of pride. “I purchased all new lights and got the windows tinted, and it started to clean up pretty well. And then it was time to think about the wheels.”

With the stance sorted and a vision for a quality finish in mind, choosing the right rims for the project was no easy task. After much headscratching and mocking up, Josh picked up a set of CCW LM5Ts from a friend who had them fitted to an E46 Saloon. “Then I had to find a way to make them fit!” he laughs. “This was the time to shine for Tim and Dan at TL Collision. Together we stripped down the entire car – glass, weatherstripping, all the panels – and then we pulled, rolled, hammered until we got the arches pushed out well enough. After smoothing the wings and recreating the factory body contours we wanted to keep, the car went in for paint.”

Oh, and what paint it is. Resplendent in a fresh and mile-deep slathering of BMW’s own Arctic silver, the colour is perfect to represent the class and quality that Josh was shooting for from the off – understated and subtle yet utterly beguiling in conjunction with the other modifications. It’s a shimmering masterpiece. “On the car’s return we put it back together with all new weatherstripping, new clips and grommets, and new glass all-round. I then decided to have a bit of fun in building a fully custom diffuser for the rear; it began its life as an OEM Lotus Evora diffuser, and it provided a lot of amusement for me creating this rear section, which was my first shot at metalwork and sculpting.”

With the body looking tip-top and the way the M3 sat being pretty much bang-on, Josh had his buddy Geordie at Butler Tire wrap



the freshened-up CCWs in lo-pro rubber before bolting the whole shebang back together. From thereon in, it was simply a case of throwing a set of black Vader seats inside and enjoying the show season!

“I took it out to the Import Alliance show, Southern Wörthersee, Offset Kings, Southernfresh and a few other shows this year and people’s reactions have been great,” he smiles. “People here in Atlanta have a good understanding and appreciation of the hard work involved in building a proper show car.” There’s also a lot of entertainment to be gleaned from the dropped-jaw bystanders who inevitably ask the same questions of a car like this: ‘how on earth do you actually drive it that low and with that camber?’ “It just makes me laugh really,” says Josh. Well, yeah – he’s built this car for him; people will either get it or they won’t.

He called it a show car there but that really doesn’t do justice to the holistic view Josh has taken with putting this E36 together and pulling it back from the ignominy of being a tired, thrashed track car. The refreshed S50 straight-six has enjoyed a lot of bespoke headwork which, along with the custom

exhaust (straight-through, no cats, really quite noisy) and the Stage 2 air intake, really gets the 3.0 singing from the motorsport song-sheet. It’s not just a show car, it’s a track car and a daily driver, too, and the focus on quality means it’s truly a car for all seasons. He’s really kept a focus on having a usable machine as well: “It’s all genuine OEM inside with an armrest delete, stock radio, nice and simple, just the way I like it. No CD upgrade either, it’s still got the original radio-cassette!”

It’s this attention-to-detail in terms of following a personal agenda that demonstrates just how Josh has built a car to be used, and used hard. Sure, he self-effacingly refers to it as a show car – and it’s a bona fide show winner – but it’s a proper, everyday performance BMW, too. And while the CCTV cameras squeak on their pivots as they strain to keep track of him, he’s always keeping one step ahead of the game. Yeah, everybody’s watching, and he knows it... and that’s all the impetus he needs to keep it fresh. But it is, first and foremost, fun to drive, and that’s all an M3 needs to be. All eyes on Josh – but he’s having too much fun to care. In your face, Orwel ●



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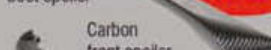


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In 1873, the western United States of America experienced something unprecedented and terrifying: the arrival of the Rocky Mountain locust. Or, more specifically, rather a lot of Rocky Mountain locusts. The swarms were massive; as they flew overhead they blotted out the sun. Anything they landed on was pretty much devastated; they stripped crop clean, ate laundry from lines and wool from the backs of sheep, gnawed through wooden buildings – it was an event as close to the apocalypse as anyone had ever experienced, making an ear-shattering cacophony as they buzzed by. One swarm was estimated to be 1800 miles long and 110 miles wide, taking a

full five days to pass. Just have a think about that for a moment. That's a hell of a lot of insects, and each one capable of – nay, seemingly intent upon – the absolute destruction of everything in its path.

It was the largest recorded gathering of living things that the world had ever seen, with one estimate putting the total number of locusts at twelve trillion. People were swatting at them with spades, dousing them with insecticide, blasting them with incendiary devices – nothing made any difference. They were unstoppable. At a time of enormous migration of farmers to the western US and Canada, the entire area was reliant on crop yields, with every

farmer indebted to brand-new mortgages and shiny fleets of machinery. The locusts destroyed countless lives. And yet at the end of the summer, they all just disappeared.

Why are we talking about locusts? Fear not, it'll become clear. But it's in no way a suggestion that the glorious 2002 you're feasting your hungry eyes upon here has any of the properties of a parasitic swarming grasshopper; far from it, in fact – it's a beautifully original retro survivor with a sprinkling of modern embellishments to earn it a place in the affections of today's dropped-to-the-floor Bavarian motor enthusiast.

"It was always inevitable that I'd end up

When he started tearing apart this 2002, it was only ever Simon Fried's intention to restore it to standard spec but fate had other plans...

Words: Daniel Bevis Photos: Ronald Veth

TEMPTING FATE



with a BMW," explains owner Simon Fried. "They were always around when I was growing up – my uncle is an engineer at BMW, and my dad was a 2002 fanatic in his younger years." Fait accompli then, right? Surely Simon was rocking an '02 just as soon as he was legally able to? Well, no, not quite. "I started out in a couple of Mk2 Golfs," he says, although without any great sense of pride or excitement. Means to an end, most likely, before dipping a toe in the water of the old Beemer scene. That's just the way it has to pan out sometimes.

"When the time was right to buy a more fun car, the decision was obvious," Simon shrugs nonchalantly. "Of course it had to be

a BMW, because I love BMW. But which one...?" It wasn't too much of a head-scratcher, naturally, with a couple of 2002 shells lying around at home along with oodles of spares, thanks to his father's extensive Neue Klasse hoarding. "There are three of them at home now," he grins. "This one, an Alpina – which will be my next project – and a Baur targa. There are many spare parts kicking around from my dad's youth, which does save a bit of effort and expense in tracking things down."

So, Simon was set on which model he was after, and it was at this point that fate intervened again. "I found this car online, and it was only about ten kilometres from

where I live, which was pretty useful," Simon recalls. "The condition wasn't so great, with a fair amount of rust holes that needed welding up, but I was in the garage day and night to build my dream car and, having finally perfected the shell, it was treated to a new coat of paint in its original Fjordblau – a timeless, wonderful colour."

The fact that Simon's opted for a refresh of the car's original colour speaks of a larger issue at play – a keenness for keeping things as they were from the factory. We're not talking concours – the rims and the stance knock that on the head for obvious reasons – but simply a desire to maintain the spirit of the '02. "Originality is very important to



Below: 16" BBSs look perfect on the '02
Right: Ultra-rare rear window louvre



Gorgeous interior has been left stock, bar the addition of an Aux input for the original radio and a wood and chrome steering wheel



me," says Simon. "The car still has its original 2.0-litre engine with its Solex carburettor; the brakes are stock; the automatic gearbox is stock – in fact, for the first four years of ownership I kept the whole car totally stock. But then I got a taste for tuning..."

Ah yes, 'tuning' – that catch-all European buzzword for making a car one's own. Let's journey back to 19th century America to draw a parallel, shall we?

Scores of folk had suffered greatly from the Rocky Mountain locust crisis of 1873, but it seemed to be just an inexplicable, unfortunate and random one-off. People started to rebuild their farms, communities and lives. And then it happened the next year, with even larger numbers of locusts. And for the following two years, with numbers larger still. It was an entirely helpless situation, with so much investment having been poured into an area that was evidently inhospitable to human life for large periods of the year. Families moved to the Midwest in droves.

Fast-forward to 21st century Germany, and our friend Simon Fried was experiencing a seismic and life-changing shift of his own. "My initial plan was simply to restore an original 'oldie'," he explains, "but ultimately I couldn't resist taking a few influences from the modern tuning scene. I don't regret a single thing I've done to it either, I love the car even more!"

What's most noticeable, naturally, is the way the thing sits and what's going on under the arches. You'll have spotted that the '02 is on much better terms with the Tarmac than any factory example would be. This is thanks to a custom KW Variant 3 coilover setup courtesy of the stance experts at gepfeffert.com. "They're a short-body version of the competition units, coupled with adjustable camber plates," says Simon. "Andy Pfeffer was very helpful, and very patient with me in getting the specs just right for how I wanted the car to look." And a precision stance is nothing without the right wheels, so after much consideration Simon opted for the timeless choice of BBS



2002**ENGINE & TRANSMISSION**

2.0-litre four-cylinder M10, Solex carburettor, automatic transmission

CHASSIS

6.5x16" (front and rear) BBS RS098 wheels with 165/40 Nankang NS-20 tyres, KW Variant 3 coilovers, adjustable camber plates

EXTERIOR

Rear window louvre, period Italian turn signals, Mk1 Golf headlights, polished chrome bumpers

INTERIOR

2002 Luxury Edition black velour interior, original radio with retrofit Aux input, wood/chrome steering wheel

THANKS

My friends Sunny and Phil, who helped me where they could, Andy Pfeffer of gepfeffert.com for the perfect cooperation and patience with me!





RSs. “They’re RS098s, which were originally 7x16” and ET35, but I’ve rebuilt them with a smaller inner rim, so now they’re 6.5x16” and ET43,” Simon says. These are neatly adorned with amusingly skinny 165/40s, which give just the right amount of stretch to perfect the look. And, hey, contact patch is overrated when you’re only playing with 100hp-odd and an auto ‘box – a minimalist approach to grip is presumably the gateway to a little entertainment.

Simon’s eye for originality extends to an eager hunger for hunting down period-correct accessories and alternative parts, some of which lurk within his father’s parts store but, more often than not, have required him to cast a wide digital net to hunt down the appropriate bits to fulfil his vision. Take a look at the rear window, for example – that screw-on louvre makes hen’s teeth seem lavishly abundant. “It’s a very, very rare piece,” he enthuses, “and I was lucky enough to find it in as-new condition. I also managed to source some very rare original Italian turn signals.” These are the corner indicators at the front, usually all-orange, and something of a badge of honour for 2002 nerds. The interior was a personal triumph for Simon, too: “It’s not the car’s original interior but it is from the same



Engine has been left stock, making this 2002 all about being (very) low and slow

model! Specifically, it’s from the Luxury Edition, all in black velour.” Funny what fate can drop into your lap, isn’t it?

That was very much the feeling among those beleaguered locust victims. After a few years of flying insect terror, it all just stopped; in 1877, the swarms were smaller and seemed knackered and sluggish – after that, it never happened again. It turned out, in the end, that it was increased farming in the affected areas that was killing the locust pupae in the ground, although that wasn’t figured out until decades later. Farmers had accidentally solved the problem without even realising, simply by tenaciously sticking with what they were doing. That’s the odd thing about life. Sometimes, stuff just happens. It doesn’t always pay to

overthink it, just get on with it.

While Simon’s put a huge amount of effort into his 2002, fate has played more than a small hand in its construction. And it’s all working out rather well for him. “People’s reactions are beautiful,” he smiles. “They always want to get inside it; it was their first car, or their parents had one, or they learned to drive in one... an elderly lady happily told me that she’d had her ‘first time’ in one, which made us both laugh a lot.” And that’s just what we build these things for, isn’t it? Not specifically to elicit erotic reminiscences from pensioners, of course, but to create stories and experiences and evoke emotions. You can’t plan these things in any great detail, you’ve just got to roll with fate and see which way it goes ●





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PEER PRESSURE

You sometimes find yourself doing things simply because that's what all your mates are doing. But this doesn't necessarily mean that you're blindly following the herd – sometimes you'll end up creating something that serves as an inspiration to the group...





“A couple of my buddies own E30s,” says Luca Colaneri. “Back in 2010 they were taking part in a BMW driving school event at Circuit Mont-Tremblant which I attended for the weekend. After seeing them fly around the track, the monster with four headlights kept growing on me, the purr of the exhaust note with each pass got me holding my breath... as soon as I got back home and I started scrolling through forums to gather up as much information as I possibly could. I soon learnt that so much can be done with this model of car, it was fascinating. After a drive in one of my friends’ E30s, I was in love.”

Sometimes it really is that simple. There are a lot of cars out there, and it’s not always obvious which path you’ll end up following in your fledgling years of motoring, but with influences like this you don’t really have to give the decision-making process a lot of consideration. Yes, peer pressure led Luca into E30 ownership, but peer pressure gets a bad rap. There’s nothing wrong with sharing a common interest with your mates, is there?

“Following my research, I was looking for this specific model – a 318iS,” Luca recalls. “The black shadow mouldings it came with were just like the M3’s! So I kept searching online, and after visiting maybe four or five different vehicles, I stumbled upon this gem and wasted no time in purchasing it. In a matter of 24 hours, the seller and I were trading signatures and the car was mine.”

The fact that this particular car didn’t have a sunroof removed an element of concern for Luca, while he was also attracted by the notion of the M42 motor having timing chains rather than the fragility of a cambelt – not that the M42 would end up having much of a look in... but we’ll come to that.

“When I first purchased the car, I knew it was going to be a rebuilding process,” he admits. “I figured I was going to dump it on the ground, as low as possible, slap on some replica wheels and call it a day. The car ran perfectly, there wasn’t any urgent work to do on it, so I stored it for the winter ready to bring it out in the springtime.” But when the sepia majesty of spring arrived, Luca had changed his mind. Pulling together some funds, he arrived at the conclusion that if any modifications were going to happen, it was going to be all or nothing. Go big or go home. “I knew that after all was said and done, this would be unrivalled and incomparable with all the other E30s in Montreal,” he remembers. And he’s not done badly in chasing that dream, has he?

It certainly helped that he’d started with a solid base for the project. Sure, he was looking at a bit of work whatever happened, but the 318iS had a mint interior – no cracked dash or worn bolsters here – with an intact headlining and rear seats that looked as if they’d never been sat on. It was



the body that was presenting a few hurdles – the established E30 flashpoints of rotten rear wheel wells and battery tray, along with various bumps and scrapes to the paintwork that had lost its lustre. It was bloodied but unbowed, and Luca had the impetus to make the thing shine again. But he didn’t foresee quite how carried away he’d get!

The 318iS was duly despatched to Strasse Autowerks, a respected and revered outfit that just so happens to be owned by a great friend of Luca, who was only too happy to offer endless advice and expertise. “I approached him with the idea of rebuilding the car with a budget,” says Luca. “We started talking about what I envisaged for the car, and I ended up telling him the budget was out the window! Whatever it would cost to get it done right, so be it.”

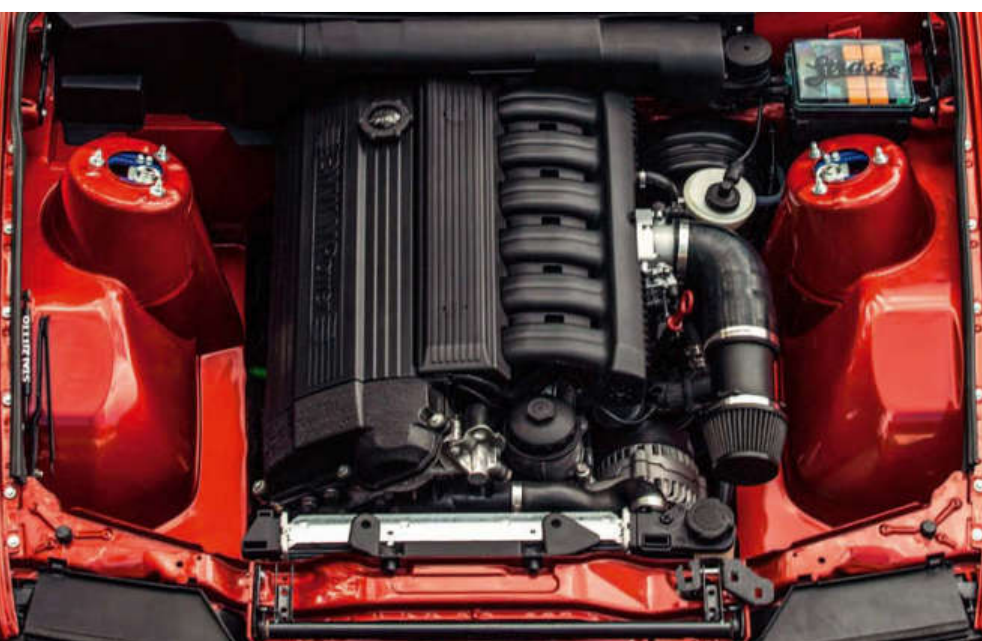
And so the strip down began, the E30 being torn back to first principles, with the dash and a few wires the only things

remaining in situ. The floors were cut out and replaced, the wheel wells repaired, and every single iota of rust eradicated and replaced with fresh metal. While all this was going on, the engine bay was shaved to impeccable smoothness and, with the body shop in control of the metalwork, Luca focused on rebuilding the M52.

Yes, you read that right. While the car’s original M42 engine had initially been a selling point, the lure of a bigger bang proved too strong to resist. “I bought an M52 out of an E36 328i Convertible,” he smiles. “After reading up on forums, I was sold on converting it into an ODB1 motor, so I went out and found myself everything I needed. I also found a great deal on some S52 cams, so I thought I might as well...” Luca’s intention was to build the motor for longevity, so he replaced the timing chains and guide rails, along with the water pump, injectors and seals, gaskets, the works, as well as



“When they see a slammed E30 laying frame, that’s when they fall in love”



E30 2.8

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

2.8-litre straight-six M52B28 from E36, M50 intake manifold, sensors, fuel rail and throttle body, OBD1, S52 cams, 3.5" 740iL MAF, Bimmerworld silicone intake, TRM Tuning ODB1 tune, 21.5lb/hr injectors, 2.5" custom stainless steel downpipes and exhaust with Vibrant high-flow cat and silencer, E36 M3 Sachs clutch and pressure plate, E36 M3 F1 Racing 14lb lightweight flywheel, E36 M3 ZF manual gearbox, Z3M differential, UUC DSSR and stainless steel clutch line, E36 328 propshaft, Z3 short-shifter

CHASSIS

8.5x16" (front) and 10x16" (rear) ET-12 Compomotive TH601 with custom powdercoat and gold spiked bolts, 195/40 Federal 595 Evo (front) and 215/40 Toyo T1R (rear) tyres, new front and rear OEM calipers with Brembo discs and EBC Green Stuff pads, universal Air Lift struts (front) and Universal Air Airhouse 2 bags over Bilstein Sport struts (rear), AKG bushes for rear subframe, trailing arms, diff mounts, front control arms and transmission, AKG engine mounts and steering rack spacers, ST anti-roll bars, E36 M3 steering rack and tie rods

EXTERIOR

BMW Sakhir orange, Euro-spec bumper trims, 318iS front lip and bootlip, Euro-spec blackout kidney grilles, Euro smiley headlights, Euro numberplate filler, MHW taillights, smoked front fogs

INTERIOR

OEM black Sport seats and black doorcards, M Tech 2 steering wheel, M Power leather gearstick and handbrake gaiters, Pioneer radio, speakers and 12" sub, custom boot build for audio and air tank

THANKS

I want to thank my parents for not giving me hell for spending all those hours and cash on a car. I want to thank everyone who was involved in this project of mine and enduring long conversations about this car. Also, all my closest friends who helped me never give up. Vitali, from Strasse Autowerks for allowing me to spend very long hours and months using his tools and shop. The support of my boys, Jamie, Flavio, Dave, Anatoli and the rest of 2LO CREW! I also want to thank everyone who's approached me in person, or on forums and social media, giving me props on the great work that has been done on the car. Of course, *PBMW* for giving me the chance and opportunity to get my story out and show people who have inspiring goals, that anything can be accomplished when having the right mindset. Yes, money does help too! Lastly, my beautiful fiancée, Amanda. Through anything and everything, especially this build, she is my supporter, my rock

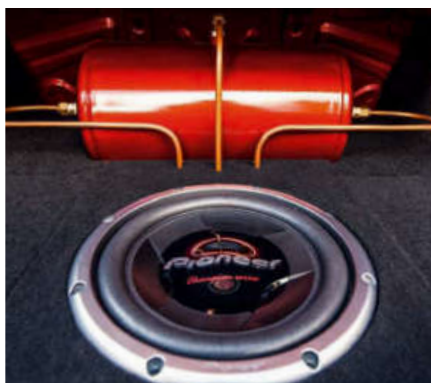


skimming the head. “I wasn’t looking for a beast of a powerplant under the hood. I just wanted to drive the car for hours at a time, one hand out the window, cruising with a reliable motor.” To be fair, the M52B28 offers a fairly healthy horsepower hike over the E30’s original unit, so this solution offers power and reliability without compromise.

Back in the bodyshop, the subframe, trailing arms and crossmember had all returned from being sandblasted and powdercoated, and once everything was bolted back together and ready to get back on the lift it was time to set about piecing together the jigsaw of all-new AKG polybushes, fuel and brake lines, fuel tank, brakes, air-ride, anti-roll bars... the list just kept going, with everything underneath the skin being either rebuilt or brand-new.

With one eye always on subtlety, Luca was keen to keep the aesthetics relatively stock, and the plan was always to keep the body panels as factory as possible. A few choice Euro-spec conversions make all the difference here – smiley headlights, kidney grilles, the different-shaped numberplate recess – while it’s the colour that really speaks volumes. “The paint is my favourite modification to the car,” he explains. “This colour caught my eye and it stuck. I was searching and searching when I finally heard news that the new M6 would have this vibrant, bright orange; when I finally saw the colour in person at the Montreal Auto Show, it was the one of the most exciting times about this build. At that time, my painter told me the paint suppliers weren’t able to create the colour because the car hadn’t been released on the market here in North America, but after convincing them, they somehow contacted BMW in Germany to get the formula.” The shade is called Sakhir orange, and the photos really can’t do justice to how this paint pops and crackles like Rice Krispies in fresh milk. It’s borderline effervescent.

“The decision to put the car on air-ride was simply because most of my friends had it, and were pretty convincing about its usefulness,” Luca concedes. See, we’re back to that notion of peer pressure again. But if such pressures lead you to bagging your ride,



that’s not something you can really complain about. You’re not a sheep, you’re a wily fox. “There are mixed feelings out there about how cars handle on air, but to be honest it was the best decision I made. It’s comfortable and very practical. When people see a lowered E30, most of the time they just glance at it; when they see a slammed E30 laying frame, that’s when they fall in love!”

And if you think the paint and the stance are a killer combo, just get a load of the wheels. There’s some next-level awesomeness going on under those four corners, in the form of a set of Compomotive TH601s. “The way they’re simultaneously convex and concave blows my mind,” Luca laughs. “I wanted something rare and wild – a set of wheels that would grab people’s attention and have them ask me, ‘yo, what wheels are those?’ When I saw these ones, I was certain they were going to end up costing as much as (or maybe even more than) a new set of wheels, but on the other hand I’d never seen another set of wheels like it before. Being the type of person who loves rare and unique things, I had to have them.”

The Compomotives fit with the plan perfectly, complementing the idea of keeping the lines stock and studding the silhouette with gorgeous detail. Simple, classy and sporty were Luca’s watchwords, and it’s safe to say that he’s pulled it off with alacrity. The crowds at Eurokracy (aka ‘Canada’s Finest European Automotive Event’) certainly thought so. “I’d been updating my build threads daily and the online reaction was buzzing in the run-up to the show,” Luca tells us. “It was a gorgeous day and the sun was shining, so the paint was looking on point. Hood off, laying frame, parked at the Strasse Autowerks booth beside all my buds, I couldn’t have asked for anything better.” And that just about brings us full circle. This is a tale of one man’s automotive proclivities being influenced by those of his friends, who then helped him to bring into being a vision that they could enjoy together. Bringing home Eurokracy’s ‘Best BMW’ trophy was merely the cherry on the cake, but the real message here is that Luca bowed to peer pressure in the best possible way. And we’re very glad he did ●

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BMW FESTIVAL 2015

When it comes to BMW-only shows in the UK,
the annual BMW Festival at Gaydon
takes some beating

Photos: Darren Teagles, BMW Car Club GB
Words: Elizabeth de Latour



The BMW Festival holds a special place in my heart because I have been going to this show for ten years now – almost the entire duration of my career here at Unity writing about BMWs and it's interesting to look back and see how the show has changed over the past decade.

In some ways it has mellowed out over the years – you certainly won't find the hordes of ICE machines pumping out bass all day any more – and so too have the cars, to a degree. As the scene has evolved and changed the cars attending have gone from wild to refined and while there are still plenty of

extraordinary machines on show, these days the chances of coming across something that offends your eyes are slim to none.

More so than probably any other BMW show, Gaydon is also home to just about the most eclectic mix of Bavarian machinery you're likely to see at any show. Bagged BMs sit next to untouched 2002s polished to within an inch of their lives. V8-swapped monsters and engine bays bristling with turbos share show space with Isettas and elegant Alpinas. ICE installs vie for attention with coco mats and ultra-rare period steering wheels and trim. This culture clash, the coming together of the two polar

opposites of the UK BMW scene, doesn't result in tutting and shaking of heads from the old guard, though. Instead, owners more used to enjoying the classic comfort of an E9 will peer at air-ride installs with pursed lips and quizzical eyebrows or aficionados will come and chat about colours and wheels. It's one big BMW love-in.

It would probably be easier to pick out cars we didn't like from the ones we did but highlights included the absolutely magnificent Taiga green E9 CSL, Ross Bradley's monster twin-turbo Chevy V8-powered E30 which, carbon bonnet resting gracefully against a nearby wheelie bin,



drew a massive crowd all day long. Marsel Theodori and his mental turbo E28 were present, with Marsel gleefully demonstrating his new straight-through exhaust and side-exit screamer pipe while the polished bay required sunglasses for safe viewing. I'd once again joined the Custom Cars stand with the E39 and shared stand space with another E39 friend, Sumil Pancholi, whose recently completed bagged example looked incredible. Dips had blended an E92 M3 power bulge onto the bonnet and a carbon fibre E46 M3 front lip into the Sport bumper, along with adding a CSL bootlid and the whole lot was finished off with custom-built

Hartge Classics with red centres.

The F cars were out in force and there was no missing the white F10 M5 of Imran from Evolve Automotive, boasting 750hp and sitting on red 21" BC Forged NL30s, flanked by a pair of F82 M4s – the white example sitting on Vossens and running 520hp while the black car was developing 550hp from its Evolve Stage 2 tune. The entire trio will be featured in a future issue of *PBMW*. Projex had also brought along a stunning-looking pair of F8xs, one M3 and M4, and while the new M cars don't sound anywhere near as good as the E9x M3 with its S65 V8, it doesn't take much to get them

looking fantastic. ING Sport had brought along a couple of stunning racers, with its S65-powered Z4 making a hell of a noise whenever the guys fired it up for a rev (which was quite often!). Numerous BMW Car Club regional stands were dotted about the place along with the Total M Cars boys, lining the main arterial road, as well as the E39 Club UK and numerous other forums and groups. To top it all off there were trade stands galore from the likes of Thorney Motorsport, M Style, Dodo Juice, Meguiar's. Along with the good food and stunning sunshine the BMW Festival had the ingredients for the perfect show ●





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GAZ SHOCKS BMW COMPACT CUP ROUND 3

CROFT

The Compact Cup competitors headed north for round three. Croft Circuit was new to many so there was an opportunity for new faces to challenge at the front of the grid. Our man James Foard gives us the lowdown from both track side and behind the wheel...

Photos: James Foard and BMW Race Days

QUALIFYING

With 40 cars on track, getting space in qualifying was important for everyone and immediately it was clear that the advantage lay with those that had been able to push. However, yet again, it was the RAW Motorsport drivers

to the fore, with pole going to Mike Tovey, closely followed by his team-mate and championship leader Steve Roberts. Both drivers set blistering lap times below 1:43.30. Next up were Jonathon Davis and Paul Hinson, who actually set identical times just 0.1 seconds off Roberts. Richard Miles and

Ben Pearson were on row three, followed by James Gornall and David Drinkwater on row four. The top ten was rounded out by another RAW driver Ian Jones, followed by Simon Roche. The grid once again promised some very close racing, with the top 17 cars covered by just 1.5 seconds.

RACE ONE

- 1 Steve Roberts
- 2 David Drinkwater
- 3 Mike Tovey

Fastest Lap:
David Drinkwater (1:43.31)



Roberts made the best start and led into turn one, with pole man Tovey relegated to second. In third it was Hinson, closely followed by Davis, Miles and Drinkwater. Owen Hunter made a great start from 11th to be next up, with James Gornall and Ben Pearson losing ground with slow getaways (Gornall's caused by a missed shift from first to second gear). Further down the order there was carnage as Neil Roche was pushed into a spin and blocked the chicane, so cars scattered left and right to avoid the stricken car. The drama continued on lap one as Jim

Benson and Pearson made contact into Tower bend, which put Benson out of control on the grass. As he rejoined they were both held up, so Gornall gratefully took back two of the places he'd lost off the start line. Drinkwater then passed Miles into Sunny In and Davis into the hairpin. This pushed Davis wide and so Hunter and Miles followed him past Davis as they crossed the line to complete lap one. Benson also had further misfortune when he was spun round by Ian Jones.

Entering lap two, Tovey and Roberts had opened up a gap to the chasing pack behind.

Gornall was now on the back of this group behind Davis but he hit the tyre stack at the chicane and went way off track, actually making it onto the rallycross circuit! Amazingly he kept his foot buried and managed to rejoin only losing two places to Jones and Pearson. The main mover over the next few laps was Jonathon Davis. First he passed Miles into Sunny In corner with an uncompromising manoeuvre that sent Miles wide and then tried a move on Hunter and Drinkwater into Tower bend, but overshot his braking and ran wide. On lap five Paul

DRIVER'S PERSPECTIVE

"It was my first race since my 2014 Production BMW Championship campaign. It was a completely new challenge for me, however, as it was my first time driving this 318ti and also my first time racing at Croft Circuit. Unfortunately I wasn't able to do any testing due to budget constraints so I knew it would be challenging to be competitive. Fortunately being with the RAW Motorsport team meant that I had access to Robin's wealth of knowledge and the other drivers' on-boards from the test day to learn from."

QUALIFYING

"For qualifying, my excitement and nervousness both increased by equal measures! Straight out the pit lane and immediately there was both traffic to get past and faster cars coming through. After a few laps I settled into a rhythm and tried to learn the car, the circuit and how hard to push to set a fast time, with my 318ti feeling well balanced. My best lap time was around 2.8 seconds off pole, which over Croft's long lap was not too bad; however the competitiveness of the championship meant that I would start in 29th for race one and 28th for race two out of the 40 cars. Not exactly ideal but hopefully progress could be made, especially with new brake pads being put in for the races!"

RACE ONE

"I was almost caught out at the start as being so much further back on the grid than I'm used to meant that the wait for the red lights was much shorter than I'd been expecting! Nevertheless, I got a good launch, but was soon boxed in and by the first corner any advantage had been lost. There was then carnage as cars span and touched just ahead of me. I took the escape road and cut the chicane to avoid someone facing backwards! The rest of lap one passed without incident as I tried to get a feel for the pace. However, going into turn one on lap two I could feel the brake pedal getting slightly long and at Tower bend the pedal went nearly to the floor! I ran wide, only just keeping the car off the grass – not ideal! A pit stop was needed and it transpired that the bias was too much to the front which had overheated the brake fluid. With the bias moved more to the rear brakes I was back out on track, but was now a lap down and the rest of the race was treated as a test session."



Hinson unfortunately had to retire due to a mechanical issue, which released Drinkwater to try and chase down the top two. Moments later Davis made it past Hunter with another committed pass into Sunny In. However one lap later Davis was out of the race and in the farmer's field after putting a wheel on the grass exiting Sunny Out corner which sent him spinning across the track.

By this point Tovey had been caught by Drinkwater and their battling allowed Hunter to close, so soon they were all nose to tail. First Drinkwater and Tovey went side by side,

which Hunter used to his advantage as he squeezed past Drinkwater into third at Tower but Drinkwater re-took the position a few corners later. Drama followed on the next lap as Hunter went for a gap on the inside of Drinkwater going into Tower. However the gap was quickly closed which put Hunter on the grass in the braking zone. Consequently Hunter couldn't stop the car and shot off across the track in front of Tovey and onto the grass on the outside of the bend. Hunter rejoined to finish 12th. On the final lap Drinkwater undertook a thorough

examination of Tovey's rear bumper, culminating in a large hit going into Sunny In. Tovey caught the slide and managed to keep the place but they still ran side by side into the final hairpin, tyre smoke filling the air as both locked up. On the run to the line Drinkwater just managed to snatch the advantage from the irate Tovey and took second place by just 0.05 seconds! Out front it had been a supreme drive by Roberts to win the race, 8 seconds clear of the intense battles behind. Richard Miles claimed fourth, Ian Jones fifth and James Gornall took sixth.



RACE TWO

- 1 Steve Roberts
- 2 James Gornall
- 3 Jonathon Davis

Fastest Lap:
James Gornall (1:43.40)

The race two grid was set from each driver's second fastest lap time in qualifying. This meant that race one pole man Mike Tovey had to start from seventh on the grid, with plenty of work to do. It was Jonathon Davis on pole, with Roberts alongside, followed by Miles and Gornall on row two. Ben Pearson was alone on row three with Paul Hinson a non-starter due to his problems in race one. David Drinkwater would also not start due to mechanical issues.

As in race one, it was Steve Roberts who made the best start and led away. Davis slotted into second, with Gornall in third,

Miles in fourth, Tovey in fifth and Pearson in sixth. Starting lap two both Tovey and Pearson made it past Miles and as they went side by side Tovey was forced to cut the chicane, but rejoined still ahead of Pearson. For second place there was a change, too, as Gornall slipped past Davis. On lap six Pearson dived to the inside of Tovey into turn one. The move ended in disaster as Pearson mounted the curb and grass on the inside and launched into the side of Tovey spinning him round a full 360 degrees. Unbelievably both drivers continued with Pearson not losing a place and Tovey only dropping to seventh behind his

RAW Motorsport team-mate Ian Jones. Tovey then re-passed Jones quickly and set off chasing Richard Miles. Owen Hunter also made it past Jones on lap seven and challenged Tovey for fifth to the chequered flag, but could not get past. Roberts again won the race to make it a double for the weekend, but James Gornall had kept him honest all the way to the finish. Jonathon Davis had a quiet race but was delighted with a podium in third. Miles crossed the line in fourth but would later be excluded for being slightly underweight which promoted Pearson to fourth, Tovey to fifth and Hunter to sixth.

DRIVER'S PERSPECTIVE – RACE TWO



"For race two the brake fluid had been changed and with the bias now correct I had full confidence on the brakes. I made another decent start and made up a couple of spots from 28th. Fortunately there was less carnage than in race one. For most of the race I followed Craig Jamieson closely as we both had good pace and picked up several places over the first few laps. The car balance was fantastic and I was revelling in the feel of my RAW 318ti, which felt livelier

than the E30 that I'd raced previously. On lap seven I passed Craig into the hairpin with a small lock up and bit of opposite lock, but the move was completed! Next I caught Dean Blackburn who I passed around the outside into the complex – finally I was getting the feel for this racing lark again! On the final lap I was right behind Nick De Jesus but couldn't find a way past. Still it was a really fun race, as I finished 18th, a big improvement from 28th on the grid in just nine racing laps."

NEXT ROUND

The championship stays in the north for round four which will be held at Oulton Park. Steve Roberts will surely be looking to extend his winning run but, as ever, there is likely to be a long list of challengers who will take the fight to him! ●

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FUELED SOCIETY 2015

The fourth annual Fueled Society event was bigger and better than ever.

Words: Sam Preston Photos: Gordon Irvine



The Tetley, an attractive industrial building which is the former home of the famous tea brewer of the same name near Leeds, has recently become a 'centre for contemporary art and learning' (not to mention a fantastic gastropub and bar!). This means it's the ideal location for one of the classiest car shows in the UK: Fueled Society. The event is now in its fourth year and keeps things different by promising to show off modified cars as works of art in a notably swanky setting. As you can imagine, then, the standard of cars attending was impressively high, with some of the UK's freshest and most distinctive builds looking even more spectacular under the stylish backdrop.

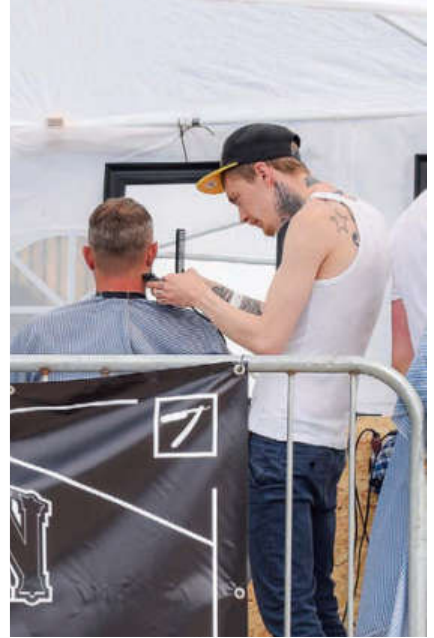


The Fueled Society weekend started on the Saturday, where guests were invited to The Tetley for food, drinks, films and a proper chill-out with very little cars involved, before partying the night away in the bar. Sunday was the day where the cars flooded onto the site, with a huge variety of machinery filling the area.

The cars on display were a real mixed bag, with a strong Japanese contingent punctuated by pockets of German machinery (and a Volvo) and there were a couple of extremely tasty BMWs in the mix. We were loving the bagged red 1 Series hatch on all-black Hamann PG1s, the stunning E92 of Joe Addison on three-piece Style 32s (coming to an issue of *PBMW* soon!) and there were a couple of jaw-droppingly gorgeous E28s as well, mixing it up with Hartge and BBS rims.

Organiser Jim Novak gave us all we needed to know about Fueled Society in a nutshell: "The event has been running since 2012 from Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire, initially as a camping weekend. This is the first year we have been at The Tetley which was a totally different direction for us but was also a very successful one. Our aim is to bring everything awesome from every car genre to one venue. It's just a chance to grab a beer and admire what is cool about something you potentially aren't into. We do have an award system but this event isn't about standing by your cars all day. We're in the process of organising another camping event to run alongside The Tetley one as we know our audience loves the atmosphere on the Saturday night only we create!" ●





BIMMERFEST EUROPE

If you like your BMW shows big and European, Bimmerfest Europe ticks both those boxes in a big way.

Words: Elizabeth de Latour
Photos: Katjana Vrösch, Mathijs Bertens,
Maikel van den Wildenberg, Martijn
Koedijk, Rowan van den Bragt



The annual Bimmerfest Europe event is as much 'bimmerfeast' or 'bimmerbeast' as anything else; it's vast and amazing. Each year Venlo in The Netherlands

becomes home to one of the largest and most spectacular BMW shows anywhere in the world and the 2015 gathering pushed the boat all the way out and over the horizon.

This was the third Bimmerfest Europe and some 2100 BMWs attended, a new record, with some 6000 people admiring them. In fact, the organisers had to double the size of the showground in order to fit everyone in.

For this year's show, Bimmerfest brought back the M Arena and the Alpina Paddock, but with the Buchloe BMW master celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2015, the latter section was given some special attention and hosted a huge number of stunning and incredibly exclusive Alpinas.

Another anniversary being celebrated was 40 years of the 3 Series and an area dedicated to the E21 was created to give the original 3 Series some well deserved time in the spotlight. There was also an '02 area for the much-loved classic and an E36 world record attempt, which saw a veritable horde



It was great to see a couple of UK cars making the trip, like Achu Chandrakumar's fierce E93



Above: Very tidy-looking E36 M3 – red and gold go so well together
Left: You can't go wrong with a supercharged E92 M3, and we love the custom headlights



The crowds were massive and the selection of cars amazing



of excited E36 enthusiasts looking to bring together the largest number of E36s in one place ever.

Aside from the numerous special areas and static displays, Bimmerfest Europe had plenty to offer those looking for something a little more moving. The Bilstein handling course has been a show staple since the inaugural event and again gave visitors the chance to put their BMWs through their paces. The Guerilla Exhaust Kickdown Competition was a new event and offered up drag racing with a twist – you had to accelerate as hard and fast as possible up the

strip but you then had to bring your car to a complete stop within a square box in order to win. Finally there was the Toyo Tires Wet Track Experience, offering participants the chance to see how their BMWs behaved on a slippery track, which was not only a lot of fun but also an excellent learning experience.

With a static display of epic proportions and plenty of activities to keep visitors of all ages entertained it's no wonder Bimmerfest Europe just keeps getting bigger and bigger year on year. And with Venlo only being a few hours drive from Calais, it's a show that UK BMW enthusiasts should check out ●



It wasn't just about static displays, plenty of driving action kept everyone entertained

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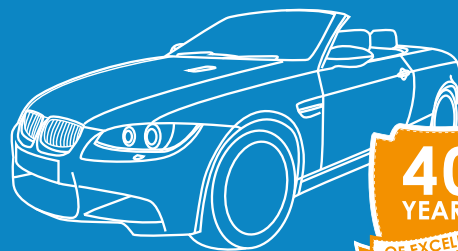
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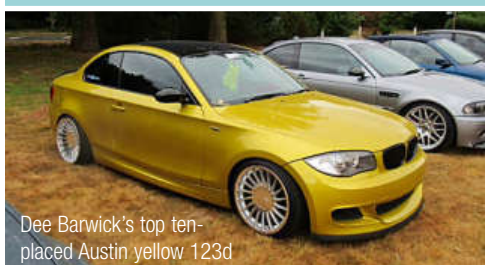


TOP 10 WINNERS

- 1st Pat (Chevy truck)
- 2nd Luke (E30 M3)
- 3rd Kevin Wanstall (E46 Alpina B3)
- Matt Roberts (E30 Convertible)
- Harry (E30 Touring)
- Paul (Ford Escort van)
- James (Ford Cortina Mk3)
- Dee Barwick (123d Coupé)
- George (E24 635CSi)
- Ben Young (E92 335d)



Above: James Barrett's E46 M3;
Left: Harry from HTS's air-ride E30 Touring



Dee Barwick's top ten-placed Austin yellow 123d





Nev D'mello's
E61 M5 Touring on Alpinas



LEX 2015

BimmerFlex is back on the map and this year's gathering coaxed a fine mix of cars out into the Surrey surroundings.

Words: Elizabeth de Latour

Photos: Richard Flex

After returning to the BMW events calendar last year following a hiatus, BimmerFlex was back again for 2015, with main man Richard Flex at the helm. The venue was once again the Fairmile Arms pub in Cobham and you couldn't really ask for more from a venue, with plenty of space for attendees and a pub on hand for drinks and grub.

This year Richard opened the event up to non-BMWs, which enticed a few other marques along for a splash of variety. The weather was disappointing but it did brighten up as the day progressed and numbers were up on last year's event, so hopefully the only way is up for BimmerFlex. As always it was nice to catch up with familiar faces of the BMW show scene and with some top ten treats for the best cars of the day, it was most definitely a grand day out ●



THANKS

Richard Flex wanted to thank the management and staff at The Fairmile Arms, *PBMW* magazine, DJ Jimmy for the music and PA system, Nev and Rob for judging the show and field management, Carla and Mark for helping with the running of the event, and Angie. The 2015 BimmerFlex show was dedicated to Nev, Rob and *PBMW* magazine.



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Win! a Renown USA steering wheel

Photos: Francisco Hernandez, Christine Yang

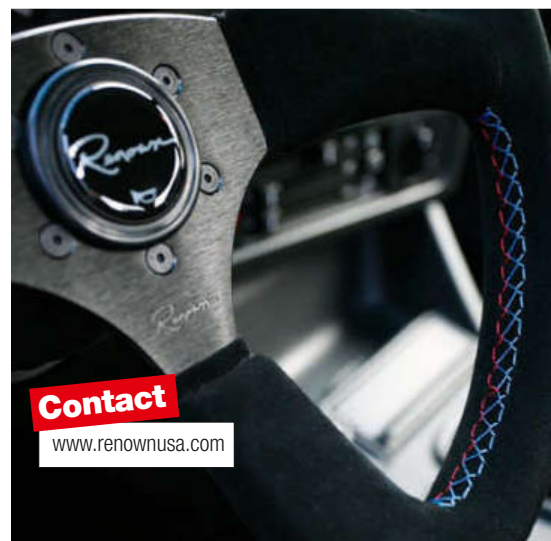
This month we've teamed up with the guys at Renown USA to offer you the chance to, quite literally, get your hands on a brand-new Renown steering wheel for your BMW. These super-sexy steering wheels are the talk of the town and the perfect addition to your classic or track car, and anything in between really. All of Renown's steering wheels use 6061 T6 aluminium frames for lightness and strength and are finished in either leather or suede, though the latter should only be chosen for occasional use or gripped with driving gloves, otherwise the oils in your skin will ruin the suede finish.

With plenty of designs to choose from, you're certain to find your perfect partner in

the Renown range that will not only look fantastic in your car but will make driving it even more of a joy. And with prices starting from just £125, a Renown steering wheel won't break the bank and fitting is easy and painless, with full instructions available on the website.

For our competition, Renown is letting our winner choose any steering wheel design, with free shipping to anywhere in the world. The only thing you need to add is a hub adapter designed for your car with the same 70mm PCD six-bolt pattern in order to fit the wheel.

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Terms & Conditions: All entries must be submitted by 5 November 2015. One entry per person. The winner will be picked at random by us and our decision is final. There will be one winner. The winner will be contacted personally and the prize sent out. You must be over 17 years old to win and be a resident of the UK, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Employees of Renown USA, Unity Media and associated companies are ineligible to enter. All readers taking part must supply their name, address, email address and telephone number.

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OUR CARS

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SAM'S E46 M3

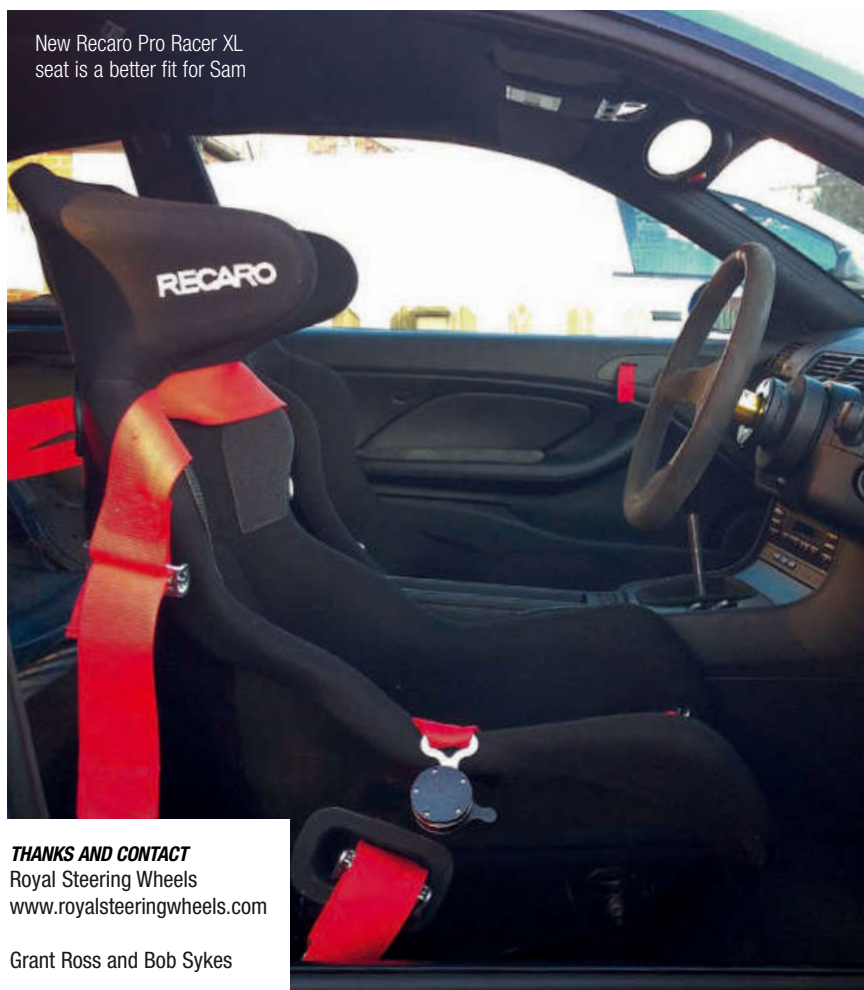
Stripping out the sound deadening of any car's interior is never fun, it's ever so boring, repetitive and never-ending. Just the kind of job you wished you'd never started, but once it's done it's done.

My goal was to make the stripped interior look as tidy as possible. Just because it's a

gutted track car doesn't mean it can get away with looking tatty, not with me anyway.

As audio was never going to be reinstalled I permanently removed the wiring and all the radio and GPS aerials, along with the C-pillar lighting and parking sensor wiring, meaning I could thin down both the looms that ran down

New Recaro Pro Racer XL seat is a better fit for Sam



THANKS AND CONTACT
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Grant Ross and Bob Sykes





With all the sound deadening and unnecessary bits removed, interior was given a lick of paint

either side of the car and tidy them up, completely wrapping them in loom tape.

Another distant luxury that will never see this car again are the rear seats, making the mounting brackets pointless, so I took an angle grinder to the rear seat mount, thus permanently removing them. The point of no return passed long ago.

Carrying on with the weight saving, I removed the front factory seat belts and tensioner, along with all the airbags as these safety features were pretty pointless with the bucket seats running six-point harnesses.

Once I was happy with everything that had been gutted I then painted the interior in the areas that had been missed from factory and the many areas from where the sound deadening was removed.

With a freshly painted interior I just had to fit some more goodies. As my audio blank was staying I upgraded from the matt black ally composite sheet to a carbon fibre panel. Weight

saving for this was minimal but carbon fibre is so much cooler!

Round two with the parts upgrades meant a different driver seat; there's pros and cons to being 6'4". The biggest con is that I'm too tall for the shoulder harness slots on a Recaro Pole Position, making it unsafe for me. The other half of Team BFF, Grant Ross, lent me one of his Recaro Pro Racer XL seats, which is perfect for me and probably one of the best seats on the market. I liked it so much I managed to score myself one that had just gone out of FIA date.

Last but not least was a steering wheel freshen up. The suede on my Sparco wheel had seen better days so I sent it over to Royal Steering wheels for a retrim. I opted for black Alcantara with white stitching. I know white stitching was a bold move but being a massive Senna fan I just had to go down that route. While my wheel was away being trimmed Bob Sykes lent me a really nice MOMO Model 78



wheel which I got on well with around Goodwood circuit on a track day. The following week I got my wheel back from Royal. The trim was totally amazing but sadly I had been spoilt by the MOMO Bob had lent me and as good as mine looked I preferred the drive from the loaner, so I think down the line one of those may be purchased.



Sparco steering wheel treated to a retrim by Royal Steering Wheels and looks like new





THORNEY MOTORSPORT'S F82 M4

I'm not really a fan of aesthetic changes to bodywork. On the one hand I look at it from an aerodynamic view and expect BMW to have just a little bit more skill in getting their cars' aero right than I can but also visuals are very much a personal thing so you might end up developing something that you might like and no one else does, so it's full of pitfalls.

That said, the M4 does appear to have a few gaps in its styling that most people who see the car immediately comment on. The main thing being the front bumper. It just looks like they forgot to add a bit to the bottom or that it's broken off somehow so we knew that the front end needed a splitter of some kind. The rear of the car is less of an issue visually: the wide stance and swept bootlid look pretty good and don't need any changes, I think. However, as well as the visual side, the addition of wings and splitters can make a difference to how the car handles so we looked at the rear with that foremost in our minds. Even after the changes to springs we fitted the general feel is that the M4 is still a bit of a handful. Our car runs over 500hp now in development form and it's still not the natural handler we want it to be, so we decided to look at the aero side to see how we can improve it.

The subject of aerodynamics on cars is huge and certainly too big to give any kind of credence

to in a short article like this but in simplified form the idea is to increase downforce and minimise drag – not an easy task as one tends to cause the other. The M4 suffers a little from understeer when off the power and from oversteer when on the power, mainly brought about by its power delivery rather than aero but it will have an effect in this regard as well. So the plan was to come up with visual and aero upgrades to the front and rear of the vehicle with the emphasis on quality and fitment. It's a £60k car after all, so the bodywork has got to look right.

First up was the front splitter. Usually the bigger the better on race cars, as a splitter can have a dramatic effect on counteracting understeer, however our first try was just too big. Not only could we not get it off the ramp but on the first road drive it clattered it against a kerb, so that failed. The second version was better but the fit still wasn't right. It went on but the moulds weren't quite right on the underside of the bumper so we went back to the drawing board (it's still there now!). Running out of time for the BMW Car Club show where we wanted the car complete for our stand we decided to try the BMW M Performance version. We'd seen a few of course and were impressed by the quality but less so the price: £800-odd is a lot for a couple of small pieces of carbon fibre and some injection moulded plastic, but with no time to

finish our own version we decided to fit one.

The front end effect is pretty good; ideally we'd like the same but 30mm longer with extra brake ducts (as ours has) but the fit is good and it sets off the car nicely, especially when we added the black grills to replace the chintzy chrome ones. We will still look to complete the front carbon splitter but for the meantime the M Performance one looks pretty good.

For the rear we worked with one of our German race team partners to fit a nice simple, small wing. By keeping the pitch relatively flat we have reduced drag and with an inbuilt gurney flap (a small vertical lip on the upper surface of the wing) we've added a decent amount of downforce at high speed – enough so you can feel it on the car. The wing is mounted as far back as possible to maximise this effect.

Next up was the bonnet: the standard M4 bonnet actually weighs a hefty 12.4kg – which is a lot – so we wanted to lose some weight from this (especially high up on the car where it sits) although the main reason was to get some heat out. The force-induced nature of the M4 is such that heat is always going to be an issue and the M4 gets hot. Whilst we develop oil coolers and radiators etc the simplest way to get heat out is to vent the bonnet so, again, by working with some of our German partners we came up with a vented bonnet in carbon fibre. At the moment this is still a work in progress; we've gone a bit too far on the weight loss so that the bonnet has too much movement, especially at high speed. This is not acceptable for a road car so we are working on that. However it looks good and the under-bonnet temperatures have dropped 50% as a result of its fitting, which is great news.

The overall look we think is pretty good. The front end looks more purposeful and whilst the M Performance splitter doesn't do an awful lot it doesn't hit much either. The bonnet works well for what we need it for, although it needs further engineering to work as a road car item. And the rear wing is subtle and functional without being too over-the-top. Of course, we might be wrong; beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so if you think differently then please do let us know...

M Performance splitter looks the part but is only a stopgap until Thorney's own item is ready



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OUR CARS



ELIZABETH'S E39 540i

When it comes to making a car look right I reckon the two most important things are ride height and wheels. Slam a car on crap wheels and it won't do it any favours; stick some amazing wheels on a car that's riding like a 4x4 and they won't look anywhere near as good as they could and should. And so, with brakes, studs and nuts in place I decided it was time to step up my wheel game after a year with the Cades (which had served me well). Initially I approached the situation with a small budget, though as you will read in a future issue (and may already have seen in some pictures) I didn't manage to stick to that plan for long.

I got onto eBay and started scouring the ads with a rough idea of what I wanted but open to being persuaded by a particularly attractive set of wheels if something interesting came along. My main criteria was they had to be something just a little bit different. I wasn't hunting for anything wildly obscure and painfully rare, just not the same old wheels that you see everyone running at every show and meet. Every BMW model has that one wheel that everyone goes for, usually because it's a good-looking wheel. For the E39 it's arguably the 18" M Parallel – a handsome wheel that really looks good on the 5 Series and that's why it's so popular. That's also why I knew I wouldn't be buying any of those. In the end I actually ended up going into the BMW wheel stable, but I managed to get hold of something that you tend not to see around so much.

During one eBay search I happened upon a set of 18" BBS-made Style 42s, which caught my eye because there were six of them (four 8s and two 9s) but also because I really like the design and they were optional on the E39 when new. The 18s are relatively rare, with most sets on sale being the 17s and, as a fan of cross-spokes, they appealed to me. They might not be one of BBS's classic designs, the unloved BBS wheel perhaps, but you can't really argue with two-piece splits from a company as iconic as this. The price was right and the wheels were only 20 minutes up the road from me so I

popped over one day after work to grab them. They weren't in awful condition but needed some TLC to make them presentable and also needed tyres but I was happy with my purchase.

I didn't want to go as dark on the wheels as I had with my Cades and after looking around online for some inspiration for the refurb I decided that I wanted metallic grey centres with polished lips – a solid combo. When it came to doing the work I wanted to use Dips Amin, proprietor of The Custom Cars in Hayes. Be it bodywork, engine mods or wheel refurbs Dips really knows what he's doing and is a familiar face on the scene, as well as being a familiar face in *PBMW* with numerous feature cars. I told Dips what I wanted and left him to work his magic as I went on the hunt for tyres.

Previously I'd been running standard E39 sizes and rubbing something terrible when low, so I wanted to run a bit of stretch this time around. I turned to Falken for the rubber, having run Falken tyres before and being impressed with their performance. Plus, the Falkens are well-known for stretching well so they seemed like the perfect choice for my plans with these wheels. I opted for the Falken Ziex ZE914 Ecorun, a mid-range performance tyre, the company's first-ever low rolling resistance model

Falken Ziex tyres are fantastic all-rounders; Eibach's 20mm Pro-Spacers fitted front and rear



and one developed with comfort in mind. Of course, that doesn't mean that performance is compromised in any way and the Ziex ZE914 offers excellent grip and handling in both wet and dry conditions, with an asymmetrical design and four longitudinal grooves to improve water clearance as well as wet braking while the stiff tread blocks enhance directional stability and improve cornering performance. They're extremely reasonably priced, too, and ticked all the boxes for me and the E39. For the 8" and 9" wheels I opted for 215/45s and 225/40s, offering a bit of stretch but nothing too mental, just enough to tuck the sidewalls in past the arches when running low.

I got the call from Dips that the wheels were ready and when I popped over to collect them I definitely wasn't disappointed. The metallic grey centres were perfect, just the right shade, and they looked fantastic with the polished lips. Dips had delivered and I couldn't wait to fit them. The Style 42s are a standard E39 fitment which puts the offsets at 20 and 24 respectively – pretty low compared to some other BMWs but on an E39 that means serious tuck, and with the tyres now no longer likely to rub I wanted to push the wheels further out. After spending some time on willtheyfit.com and doing plenty of 5 Series forum-based research I calculated that 20mm spacers would get the wheels sitting just right, giving me offsets of 0 and 4, front and rear respectively. When it comes to spacers, Eibach's Pro-Spacers are the business. They're made from high-tensile strength aluminium which means they are extremely light and strong, so that's what I opted for. At this width the spacers are designed to bolt to your hub and you then bolt your wheels to the spacer, which is for a far stronger and safer mounting method than simply using longer bolts. With my stud kit I didn't need to worry about that, though, and just slipped the spacers over the studs before mounting the wheels in place with the nuts. The fitment was now perfect in my eyes, giving the 540i a much more purposeful stance, allowing me to drop the car with no rubbing and

Stripping the wheels revealed more than a bit of TLC was required

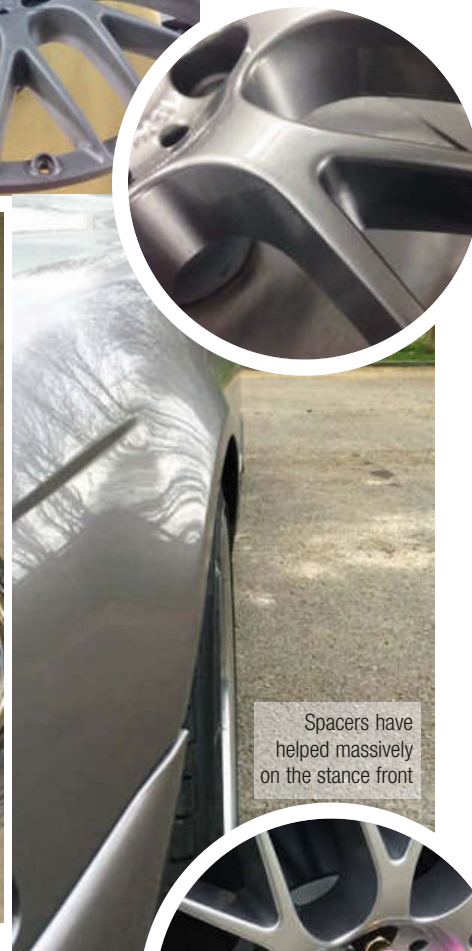


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Finished Style 42s look fantastic, with metallic grey centres, polished lips and just a bit of stretch

when aired-out there was a hair's breadth between the lips and the arches. Perfect.

For the finishing touch I decided to get some BBS centre caps and valve caps. Now, being BMW wheels, the Style 42s were designed to accept the standard size BMW centre caps, which differ in size from all of BBS's aftermarket centre caps offerings. That meant browsing eBay for some knock-off caps in the correct size, likewise with the valve caps which BBS never made, but as the wheels are genuine BBSs I felt my decision was justified and certainly a million times better than putting BBS centre caps on RS-alike fake splits...

The verdict? Well, I am absolutely over the moon with the wheels, the refurb and how they sit on the car. They've just made it look so much better. They look bigger and with the spacers they fill the arches out so much better.



OUR CARS



PAUL'S E36 328i

Certain jobs in life shouldn't be left. It's always best to sort that nagging toothache before it comes a filling. Definitely a smart move to get your hair cut before you resemble a homeless Womble. And when it comes to your BMW's brakes, it's a smart move to make sure things are fully A1 before you hear the unwelcome sound of metal on metal.

That's where things had got to with my car recently. I had spent so long sorting out the aesthetics and driving her as hard as she should be, I had somewhat neglected the rather more important business of keeping on top of the safety items. Hence 'exhibit A' – a car that really doesn't want to stop all that well at the moment.

Fear not, though, as I am about to elevate the old tub from the realms of 'average' right up to the status of 'amazing' simply by enlisting the help of a couple of stellar brands. Upgrading the discs and pads will be a simple affair, as the calipers seem to be in good nick, and it's only really the friction material that's looking a little sorry for itself. As I have been using Tarox discs and pads for the last five seasons on my Golf GTI race car, I've gone for the same again for the BMW. And by the time you read this they should be with me and in the process of being fitted up. Not only will the hand-finished Italian goodness of the discs and pads look rather nicer through the Calibre rims than the rather crusty OEM offerings but they will doubtless stop a lot more quickly, too! Although the 328 doesn't ever go out on track, it's always nice to have plenty of stopping power under the pedal, isn't it?

On that note, I was also keen to improve the pedal feel and efficiency, too. When you stop and think about it, the lines on this car are now a worrying 17 years old. And no matter how well your motor has been looked after, the lines are known to deteriorate over time, which must mean that my existing brake lines are well overdue a replacement. Keen to fit the best possible (buying the cheapest option is never a clever move when it comes to brakes) I opted for a set of Goodridge lines. As the OEM supplier to the world's greatest prestige and supercar builders, as well as the brand beneath most of the quickest teams in motorsport, Goodridge's popular Phantom line offers superior resistance to abrasion and corrosion, unrivalled braking efficiency through greater reliability, and a complete absence of sponginess through the brake pedal, irrespective of how hard the brake fluid is worked. What's more, with a choice of ten different colours, you can go a bit crazy with the look of your under-arch area – although I went for boring black. Well, you can't argue that it's not a classic hue.

Having been to the Goodridge factory in Exeter, I can tell you that every single brake line that goes through the manufacturing is pressure tested after assembly to give both manufacturer and driver absolute confidence. And, seeing as every ounce of effort put in at the pedal end is going to be transmitted through to my new pads when they arrive, the Three will have never had it so good when it comes to the brakes. Little wonder that every Goodridge brake line is TÜV, DOT, ADR and ISO approved, really!



THANKS

AND CONTACT

www.goodridge.com
www.tarox.co.uk

JAMES' E36 328i

It has been a few months since my last report, which is all due to real life getting in the way of any further progress with the 328 – sorry!

Anyway, it's been getting plenty of use, which has highlighted a few issues. The first being that a vibration was beginning to make itself known when braking from high speed, despite the excellent bite from the new Brembo discs and Ferodo pads. I have had vibrations since swapping to the 330i front brake setup no matter what pads or discs are used but have never been able to pin-point the exact reason. However, after much head-scratching, a breakthrough was made once again by the guys at Autobahn. The idea was to measure the alignment of the flanges to see whether a misalignment was causing the discs to wear unevenly and give this vibration. Slightly surprisingly the measurements showed only a 0.5mm misalignment on the front right, which surely seemed too small to be causing the problems encountered. After a short discussion it was decided that the whole assembly should be changed just in case – but would it be enough??

Further measurements were taken after the new hub assembly fitted, which confirmed that the alignment was now bang-on. After a few days it became apparent that the vibrations were subsiding and currently, several weeks later, the vibrations have completely disappeared now the discs have worn evenly again.

The Motorsport Hardware wheel studs have proven to be very helpful when changing wheels and I am now waiting on some 12mm spacers from Hack Engineering to complete the stance of the Schnitzers.

There are some exciting developments in store for the near future as well, so stay tuned.

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JAMES MURPHY F32 428i

We're starting to see more and more modified F models appearing now and James here has been busy on his F32. While the 428i might not have the big power and six-cylinder sexiness of its bigger brother, it's plenty quick and not bad on fuel, making it a fine four-pot choice. James' example has been treated to the full selection of M Performance parts along with an aFe Stage 2 intake and 4" cat-less downpipe and Milltek cat-back exhaust system with a JB4 tune on the cards for the very near future, which should net him 310hp, making for a seriously rapid *and* good-looking 4 Series.



NICK HIGGINS E36 325i CAB

By his own admission, Nick may not have spent a fortune on his E36 Cab but he's got himself a fine soft-top. During his time with the car he's treated it to a new roof and fresh bodywork to get it looking its best and it's been lowered a healthy amount on JOM Blue Line coilovers over E46 wheels that really suit the older car's lines. The finishing touch is a set of angel eyes and the end result is a clean and smart E36.



TIM SLATER E46 330Ci CLUBSPORT

This is one shiny E46 and that's probably because Tim is a self-confessed clean-freak; it sounds like he gets just as much pleasure out of cleaning the car as he does driving it. His Clubsport has a purposeful stance courtesy of a set of FK coilovers which drop it and nice and low over the staggered 18" Cades Tyrus wheels he's fitted, which really suit the car and look great with that deep-dish at the rear. A Pipercross air filter, performance exhaust with the silencer removed and remap mean 245hp and a fantastic soundtrack from that superb straight-six. With just 58k on the clock it's still nice and fresh and looks like it could have driven out of the showroom just yesterday.

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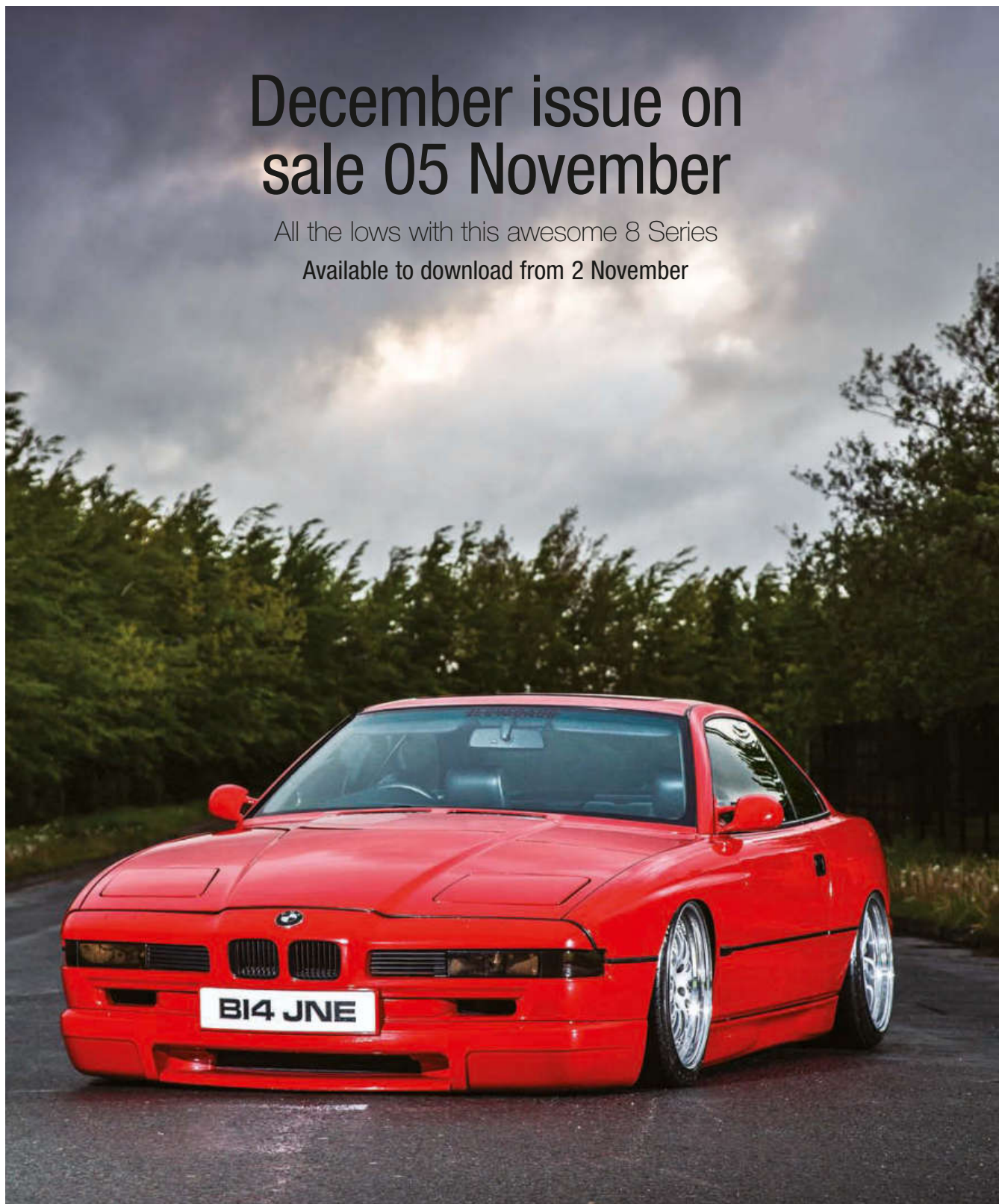
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